The ROUT OF RELIGION by Harold Begbie See Page 349

Contributions by Marie Löhr, C. Randolph Lichfield, Wm. le Queux,
Jessie Pope. W. Douglas Newton. Charles G. D. Roberts, etc.

The August

ROYAL

4

LOVE LETTERS OF AN ACTRESS
by
ELSIE JANIS
(See page 358)

"BLACKBIRD"

FOUNTPEN

The Standard of Low-priced Pens.

5/-

SIX ARGUMENTS:

It is made by the 'Swan' Pen People.
It is made in London.
It is Five Shillings.
It is the best at the price.
It is supplied in all points.
It may be exchanged if unsuitable or allowed for towards a "Swan."

BY POST FROM MAKERS, 5/1.
(with pocket clip 6d. extra).

MABIE, TODD & CO., LTD.
(THE "SWAN" PEN PEOPLE),
79 & 80 HIGH HOLBORN,
LONDON, W.C.

Sold by all Stationers.

I halve your boot-bills!

That's no small virtue — especially if you have kiddies to provide for.

I save my cost ten times over; come to that, I save health, and energy, and temper, too. I am not just a rubber heel—I am a 'Wood-Milne.' To get my value you must get *me.*

Wood-Milne

RUBBER HEELS AND TIPS

Made in many varieties—NO INCREASE IN PRICE.
Sold by bootmen everywhere—see the name Wood-Milne.

Wood-Milne Motor Tyres are the strongest pneumatic tyres made.

Digitized by Google

THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

CONTENTS FOR AUGUST, 1915.

The rights of translation and reproduction in the contents of this number are strictly reserved.

		PAGE
COVER. From a Photograph of Miss Elsie Janis, by Foulsham & Banfield.		
MISS BEATRICE SINCLAIR. From a Photograph by Elwin Neame		*Frontispiece*
POSING PICTURE PHOTOS	ELWIN NEAME	231
Illustrated from Photographs.		
HONOUR AMONG THIEVES. A Complete Story	C. RANDOLPH LICHFIELD	296
Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.		
MY LADY BEAUTIFUL	MARY MARSH	304
No. III.—THE CARE OF THE HANDS AND ARMS. Illustrated by A. K. Macdonald.		
THE HOUSE OF SUSPICION. A complete Story	WILLIAM LE QUEUX	309
Illustrated by A. Gilbert.		
THE SUMMER GIRL ON HER OWN	DOROTHY ROSE	317
Illustrated.		
JIM, THE BACKWOODS POLICE DOG	CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS	320
No. II.—THE BOOK-AGENT AND THE BUCKSKIN BELT. A Complete Story. Illustrated by Septimus Scott.		
MAURICETTE. A Poem	X.	329
PICTURE PARAGRAPHS		330
Illustrated from Photographs.		
ON THE CHEAP	LESBIA ROBINSON	333
Illustrated from Drawings.		
WAR IS WAR. A Complete Story	W. DOUGLAS NEWTON	337
Illustrated by H. W. Koekkoek.		
LUGGAGE SIMPLIFIED. A Poem	D. R.	342
CAP AND BELLS		343
Illustrated.		
THE ROUT OF RELIGION	HAROLD BEGBIE	349
Illustrated.		
A SOLDIER TO HIS LOVE. A Poem	JUDITH CARRINGTON	352
LOVE LETTERS OF AN ACTRESS	ELSIE JANIS	353
Illustrated.		
ALL UP A TREE. A Complete Story	JESSIE POPE	358
Illustrated by Stanley Davis.		
LITTLE WILLIE. A Poem	ANNE PAGE	364
FOR THE CHILDREN IN WAR TIME	PHYLLIS MONKMAN	365
Illustrated.		
ROBERT'S STEP-BROTHER	BY ONE OF THEM	366
Illustrated by Esmond.		
FOR SOLDIERS AND SAILORS TOO		369
"TOUJOURS LE SPORT!" A Complete Story	F. A. SYMONS	370
Illustrated by Fred Bennett.		
THE LEADING LADY. A Complete Story	MARIE LÖHR	374
Illustrated by Emile Verpilleux.		
STRENGTH. A Complete Story	G. B. LANCASTER	379
THE WOOING OF CORINNE. A Complete Story...	MARGARET BELL	382
MR. EDITOR—HIS PAGE		384

N.B.—All the names and characters mentioned in the stories in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are purely imaginary.

The Editor is always ready to consider contributions, whether literary or pictorial, and, where stamps are inclosed, will make every endeavour to insure their safe return in the event of their proving unsuitable, although he cannot hold himself responsible for any MSS. or drawings or photographs sent on approval. They should be addressed to The Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Authors are advised to study "How to Write for the Papers," by Albert E. Bull, obtainable from any bookseller for 2/6, or post free from The Publisher, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 2/10.

Cases for Volumes I. to XXXIII. of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are now ready, and can be obtained at the Publishing Office, price 2/- each, or post free 1/3.

Bound Volumes III. to XXXIII. may also be had, price 4/- each, post free 4/6.

The original drawings in this Number are for sale on application to the Editor.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION: 7/6 per annum, post free to any address in the United Kingdom. Abroad 7/6 post free. Canada 6/- post free. Address: The Subscription Dept., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 17 & 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

(Registered at the G.P.O. for transmission to Canada.)

C. Brandauer & Co.'s LTD.

CIRCULAR POINTED PENS.

Seven Prize Medals.

These series of Pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. Assorted Sample Boxes, 6d., to be obtained from all Stationers. If out of stock, send 7 stamps to the Works, BIRMINGHAM.

Attention is also drawn to their Patent Anti-Blotting Series.

London Warehouse: 124 NEWGATE STREET, E.C.

Digitized by Google

"TRUE BRITISH."

From the youngest to the oldest they all use

Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste

THE motto of this happy household is "Take care of your teeth and your health will take care of itself"—that is why, from the youngest to the oldest, they all use Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste.

Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste is not only a pleasant Dentifrice which gives a pearly whiteness to the teeth and sweetens the breath, but, in addition, it possesses thorough antiseptic qualities which effectively counteract the germs of decay. It thus meets every requirement of dental hygiene and, moreover, it is extremely economical in use.

Price 6d. & 10½d. per tube.

Ask your Chemist for a tube to-day.

Those who prefer a Dentifrice in powder form will find Royal Vinolia Tooth Powder delightful. Per tin 7½d. & 1/-

OF ALL CHEMISTS.

VINOLIA COMPANY LIMITED,
LONDON AND PARIS.

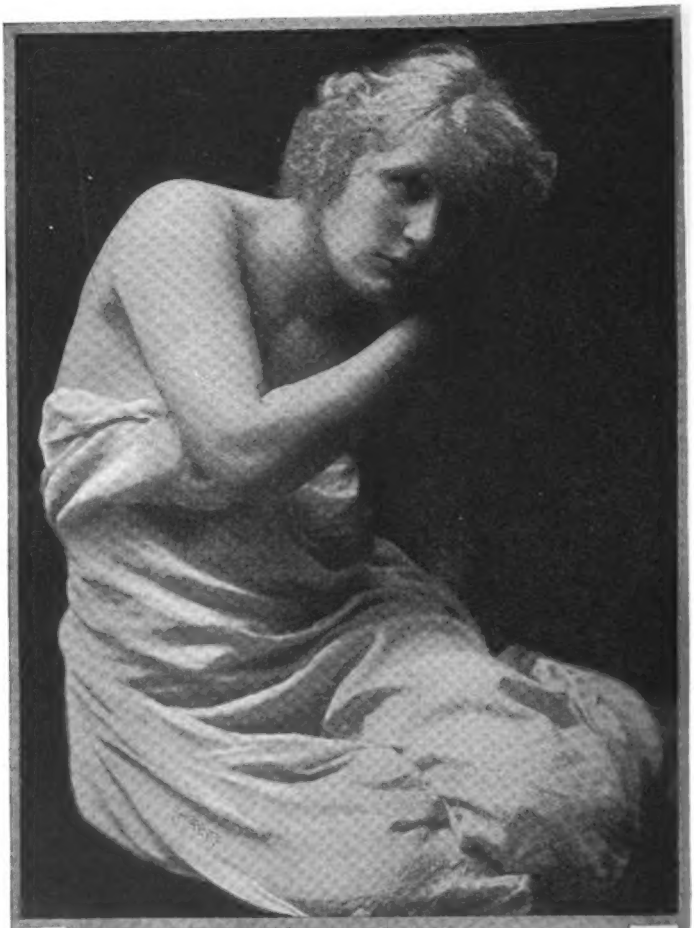
R V 191—23

Digitized by Google

Photo *Elwin Neame.*

This is only one of many charming photographs illustrating an article on "Posing Picture Photos." Turn to page 291, where one of the most expert photographers of the day discourses of his art.

Digitized by Google



Grief may be harsh and unlovely, or, as in this beautiful study, noble and touching. A sorrowful face is not enough; the whole body must be expressive of grief, and so the sitter is posed with drooping head and limbs relaxed.

Digitized by Google

A charming pose depicting the despondent outlook on life of a beautiful slave.

Posing Picture Photos

By Elwin Neame.

(Illustrated from the Author's Photographs of Miss Beatrice Sinclair.)

What the brush is to the painter or the chisel to the sculptor, the camera is to Mr. Elwin Neame, one of our most celebrated modern photographers. It may be said of him without exaggeration that he can do almost anything with a camera. He can turn out an imitation of ancient tapestry, a make-believe piece of statuary, or a delicious study of a pretty chorus girl with equal facility. Here he gives away some of the secrets of his success.—Ed. R. M.

In the old days going to the photographer was as cheery an occupation as going to a dentist. If you were a man, you sat on a happily defunct species of chair, leant your elbow on a polished round table, rested your head on your hand, arranged your hat and gloves in a still-life group on the table aforesaid, and the photographer made the worst of all your bad features. Occasionally the table was supplanted by a pillar.

If you were a woman, you sat on a U-shaped seat and folded your hands resignedly in your lap, or else pored over a presumably pious book that was in reality an empty portrait-album.

It is only during comparatively recent times that photographs have become things of beauty, worthy of comparison with the work of painters

Digitized by Google

and sculptors. Naturally, a great deal of the perfection of the present-day photograph we owe to technical improvements in plates, lenses, processes, and so on. But I think real progress only began when photographers commenced to realise the beauty of the human figure, how to compose pictures with all the lines running harmoniously, and that one defies the laws of perspective at one's peril.

All the penny books written for amateurs impress on the earnest student that if he places the foot or the hand of the sitter in the forefront of the battle, like Uriah the Hittite, that foot or hand will be distorted out of all reason, and bring down the vials of the sitter's wrath on the head of the well-meaning operator. That is well enough for a start, but it does not go a very long way, and we want a great deal more before we can get a really beautiful picture.

Every woman has some specially good point which must be made the most of. In this picture the beautiful curve of the shoulder shows to advantage——

——while this pose will appeal strongly to anyone who possesses lovely arms.

By the way, when I speak of creating beautiful pictures with a camera, I have, naturally, feminine sitters in my mind's eye. One does not, as a rule, go beyond portrait studies of men, except in theatrical work.

The first thing to do is to have in one's mind quite clearly the idea of the picture. The second is to get it into the head of the sitter. Suppose we take for an example the frontispiece, which is intended to represent "Grief."

Digitized by Google

A graceful study, in which the sitter is posed to resemble the figure-head of a ship.

Well, if you think for a moment over the word "grief," you will find the process has a peculiarly relaxing effect on all the muscles of the body. The expression "bowed with grief" is no empty phrase. Victims of grief feel weighed down by an intolerable burden of sorrow.

Proceeding on these lines, for a picture entitled "Grief," a bowed attitude, with drooping head and relaxed limbs, is essential.

So far, so good. It is not enough to secure a grieved expression on the face of a sitter. Her whole body must express grief in every line.

Another point has now to be considered. This picture is going in a magazine, so we want beautiful grief. Grief may on occasion be harsh and dreadful; in our picture it must be noble and touching. So, having achieved more or less the relaxed attitude, we must go on to the details.

The head should come forward a little, so that the beautiful line of the right arm and shoulder runs smoothly into the neck, but not too far, or the curve of the back, below the right arm, will be too sudden, and the muscles at the base of the throat will become strained and distorted. The bend of that right arm, too, requires great care or else the arm will be fore-shortened, and however lovely fore-shortening may be in drawing it is hideous in photography.

We must see, too, that the curves of the body and the bend of the knees all "run" with the curves of the arm and shoulder, and that the lines of the drapery run with them, too. Now we have nearly finished; the question remains, where shall the sitter look—up or down?

Despair and resignation speak in every line of this pathetically drooping figure, as well as in the mournful eyes and wistful mouth.

Digitized by Google

We try both ways, and find that on the whole the idea is portrayed more faithfully if she looks up, just above the camera. Now the pose is practically complete.

It goes without saying, that the exposure of the plate and the lighting of the subject have a great deal to do with the success of a picture, but we are not concerned here with these more technical matters. We are talking about the actual pose.

Personally, I prefer to work with drapery rather than with modern clothes, although the—does one call them dressmakers?—are getting more and more to appreciate the importance of revealing the lines of the figure instead of hushing them up under volumes of material, and some modern gowns are really beautiful. But, even at their best, ordinary clothes are a great handicap.

Just as every woman has what we call a "good side" to her face—that is, a side which photographs better in profile than the other—so, also, she has some particular asset which ought to be made the most of. Very often it is her shoulder—just the curve where the top of the arm runs up into the neck. I have photographed hundreds of girls with this shoulder rising out of carefully arranged drapery, and the face of the sitter looking over it.

Well, with drapery you can always make the most of a good feature, and gloss over a less attractive one, and that's why I prefer to work with it.

The great sorrow of a photographer's life is that there are only a certain number of poses on which to ring the changes, though at the same time he is bound continually to evolve new ones.

He has constantly to be devising novelties with the help of properties, furniture, and so on. To those in the know, it is always possible to tell when one of the fashionable photographers has acquired a new chair, couch, coffee-stool, or what not. Slowly, but surely, all the more beautiful stage celebrities appear in photographs sitting, reclining, or leaning on the respective objects.

Often a sitter, if allowed to roam about the studio, will of her own accord fall into a most attractive pose, and some of the happiest photographs ever taken have been secured in this way.

There are various little details connected with a picture which reveal to the eye of the expert whether the photographer has taken or has not taken the requisite amount of pains. One in particular occurs to me at the moment which does not always receive the care it merits, and that is the treatment of the sitter's hair.

How often can one tell from a photograph whether a girl is dark or fair? And yet the fact ought to be quite apparent if the operator has done his duty, although I cannot deny

The arrangement of drapery may make or mar a photograph. Here is an example of what can be done with carefully arranged drapery.

Digitized by Google

This shows a restful, easy pose, into which a sitter might fall of her own free will——

that to photograph a blonde so that her colouring is rendered accurately, requires a great deal of pains.

The only way to make fair hair look fair is to light it very carefully, and I usually employ a back or "halo" lighting to get the proper effect. The result is well worth the trouble, particularly as a fair-haired sitter invariably speaks her mind plainly if she comes out even a shade darker than nature has made her.

To ensure a successful sitting the photographer and the model must both be in the right mood—keen at getting good results and in sympathy with the work before them. The photographer -supposing he wants a tragic pose, for instance—must inspire his victim with the idea of tragedy, and she, in turn, has to do her best to feel tragic. It is the old, old story, in fact—to produce good work you must have sincerity and a determination to succeed or die in the attempt.

Some of my most successful pictures have been secured owing to the resemblance of a particular model to a well-known type. For example, you can never go far wrong in posing a Greuze or Rossetti girl after a well-known picture by one of these painters—not in an endeavour to copy slavishly, but to follow the general effect.

Some people are, of course, much easier to pose than others. There are girls who fall naturally into easy, graceful attitudes and are quick to respond to the appeals of the photographer, while there are others who are awkward and self-conscious from start to finish. Needless to say, it is very difficult to do justice to the latter, but happily they are rare. Most girls enter readily into the spirit of the thing, and will go to any amount of trouble to obtain a pleasing result.

And now you have all the secrets of the profession and can start in business to-morrow as a producer of picture photos!

——whichever way you look at it, a picturesque study of sleep in a most attractive form

HONOUR AMONG THIEVES

By C. Randolph Lichfield.

"Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day."

I

Hyde himself opened the door—a thing he never did after dark without a slight feeling of misgiving.

There was no light in the hall passage, and against the glow of the lamp some few doors down the street the figure on the step was unrecognisable.

"Who is it?" asked Hyde cautiously.

"Alf Almond," answered the slim young man in a surly voice. "Can I come in? I want a few words with you."

"Oh, yes!—yes. It's rather late, but come in, Alf. . . . Shut the door."

He led the way to the back room, and let out a flood of light and warmth.

"Come in. Gris was just going to bed, so we shan't be hurrying her."

The young woman, who sat with her back to the door, holding out a man's shirt towards the dying fire, looked round at them with a rather forbidding expression on her pale, oval face.

"You know Almond, Gris," said her husband, as she rose and quickly touched the line of hair-curlers fringing her brow.

Her eyes hardened as they dwelt on the visitor's foxy face, and she nodded.

"Good-evening," he said shortly. "Sorry to disturb you, but I've got to see Walter on business."

"Shady business, I'll be sworn, or you wouldn't come at this time of night," she returned in a mildly resentful tone.

"Nothing shady about it," retorted Almond. "And with him and not with you, Mrs. Hyde."

"No words about it, please," ordered Hyde, reaching a tumbler from the dresser. "Business is business, shady or not, and you'd better get to bed, Gris, before you set our teeth on edge. Try this yellow stuff, Alf; you look chipped. Come up to the fire, and sit down. Bring the jug across with you."

"One of these days you'll be landed fair and square in prison," declared his wife incisively, as she crossed to the door. "And you won't like it."

"No more will you!" he cried sharply, slapping the table. "What the blazes is the matter with you to-night?"

"Nothing more than always since I realised the sort of man I've married and the company he keeps!" she rejoined with sudden passion. "As for my not liking it—I'd like it so well that if it wouldn't be against my nature, Walter Hyde, I'd give you away myself."

"Oh, cut it!" expostulated Almond, as Hyde rose angrily to his feet.

"I could go back to honest work then,"

flamed Griselda, "but because I'm a fool, I suppose I shall go on servanting for you, and taking your oaths and your blows, and putting up with callers like this—this Almond man, till the police are too good for you or your luck goes out."

The table was between them, and before Hyde could get round it she whisked herself out of the room, and shut the door. Almond caught him roughly by the arm.

"Come and sit down!" he commanded. "Don't take notice. She's crazy."

"I wonder I don't kill her sometimes," muttered Hyde between his big teeth. "It's wonderful how I keep my temper with her when she has these fits."

"Aren't you ever afraid she'll give you away?" Almond inquired, helping himself liberally to the whisky.

"Isn't that sort and doesn't know enough," Hyde returned, dropping into a chair, "but I believe she'd be glad if I was put away. That's her kind. Always the same, when she gets these fits—and, mind you, she's been at me over an hour now—nag, nag. I've got a shop with a small trade—why can't I stick to it like an honest man? That's her way. Well—what did you want me for, Alf?"

"May ask!" said Almond, his sharp features taking more acute lines as he paled. "What did you put me on to a shark like Bund Grocutt for?"

"Why—what's he done?"

"Done?—done *me*," Almond answered. He got up, and, creeping to the door, opened it suddenly and peeped out. "Not so sure she wouldn't give me away," he said grimly, returning to his chair. "Yes, the blighter did me in the eye, and I don't thank you for the introduction. I brought off a 'crib' the other night in Hollam Avenue, Hampstead."

"Shakes!" exclaimed Hyde admiringly. "Was that your 'crib'?"

"Yes. And remembering what you'd told me about Bund Grocutt, I took the stuff straight away to him. One of the pieces was a necklace. He said it was paste, and paid me five for it, but I've seen in the report to-day that it was diamonds, as I thought at the start. So it was worth two hundred at least, and the dirty tyke ought to have given me seventy or eighty for it!"

"Bund's generally been straight with me," muttered Hyde solemnly.

"And he did me on other things, too, only I didn't twig it at the time. I reckon he did me down a full hundred, Walter, and I don't like it. I'm not fetching and carrying stuff to fatten him."

"He's generally been straight with me," repeated Hyde with a slight smile. "He's one of the richest 'fences' in London; he could live in Hyde Park instead of Wood Green if he liked. I don't understand it, Alf."

"And bally well don't seem to care, either!" retorted Almond, his little eyes gleaming maliciously.

"Yes, I do. Of course, I do. I feel in a sense morally responsible."

Almond shifted himself forward in his chair, and clapped a hand on Hyde's knee.

"See here, then," he whispered excitedly "I'm going to get 'em back."

"How?"

"Don't be a fool—'tisn't like you. I'm going to get them back, and take toll off him. See? I saw enough there the other night to set us both up for life, Walter, and we can do with some, what? What's the use of collecting a bit here and a bit somewhere else when most of the pickings are in his blessed loft, waiting to be lifted? Didn't it never strike you? He's made rich by chaps like us that run all the risks and trouble; why not make a bit out of him? Often enough he's done you without your knowing, I'll be bound. Come along and get your own back to-morrow night. The beauty of it is he couldn't call in the police if he copped us, and he couldn't make any complaint of any sort."

"Such a thing has never been done, Alf," said Hyde bewilderingly—"never."

"How d'you know, and what if it hasn't? Time it was. If it was only because he wiped my eye, I'd do it. It's going to be done, and I'm offering to let you in."

Hyde reached the whisky bottle and poured out a tot, which he drank neat, in a profound silence.

"Far as I know, such a thing hasn't ever been done," he said with a furtive smile. "And Bund's a person—an ugly customer; he'd as soon shoot you and get rid of you in some way as bite the end off a cigar."

"But we're clever enough for him. Look what you've done! And me—did I never take the diamond ear-rings out of the ears of a lady in Cranley Gardens? A pretty light hand, Walter, and a pretty strong nerve. That ought to be good enough for Grocutt. A fat old elephant like that would snore like thunder."

"But there's his wife, and the man that sleeps in the stables. Besides, I expect there are alarms in the house."

"Alarms!" scoffed Almond. "Say you're afraid."

"Be jiggered, no, but ——"

"Stand out, then, old top, but I'm not going to rake in your share for you. If I put it through——"

"S-sh!" whispered Hyde, and rose. He tip-toed to the door and opened it suddenly. But nobody was there and he closed it again quietly.

"All right," he agreed. "I'm on. I've had the same idea back of my mind. It's difficult for Bund to place his stuff these times, and it's accumulated. We shall have to have a taxi in waiting, and that means we'll have to take Joe Watts into it. However, there is more than enough for three, with half our usual luck."

"I think so," said Almond with an expressive grin.

II.

"So far, so good," whispered Hyde, as he drew down very cautiously the lower sash of a window of a roomy, old-fashioned house in a well-screened garden in Wood Green. "Not too easy, but easy enough."

"Bund's drawing-room," said Almond, allowing a little light from his electric-torch to filter through his fingers. "No jim-cracks to knock over; no dog to yap one into a cold sweat."

"Look out for wires though."

"I am. But, Lord bless me, what could he do if he came down?"

"Bund's no fool; he'd do something. And he's no coward, either. He'd take the law into his own hands, maybe pump us full of lead so we couldn't split, and plead self-defence. We'll be all right only when we're clear away. Mind how you open that door . . . All right?"

"Comes easy; no wires to it, I'll swear."

So they tip-toed out into the hall.

"Hullo!" exclaimed Hyde softly, peering towards the hat-stand as Almond let the beam of his torch stray, "how many heads has Bund got? Hold on and let me see. He may have a house-party and we'd do better to call another night."

There were seven hats of different kinds, and three or four different sizes, as he ascertained by trying them on his head.

"That's an old wheeze," scoffed Almond in an undertone; "every timid spinster hangs men's hats in her hall to make us chaps think we've struck a nest of hornets."

"Bund isn't a timid spinster," demurred Hyde; "nor's his wife."

"Take the penny 'bus home," came the sarcastic suggestion; "you're nervy."

Hyde wasted a resentful glance on the gloom, and turned to the stairs. Systematically he groped for possible wires, his pet abomination, and felt under the mat. But he found nothing significant, except the absence thereof.

"I don't like it," he muttered. "Seems so uncommonly easy, considering circumstances."

"Blighter! Get on or get off."

"Don't step on the tread—keep close to the wall," cautioned Hyde in response.

And thus they mounted to the bedroom landing. They paused there, listening breathlessly, and a sound struck oddly on their senses, holding them spellbound for a moment—a rough, rhythmic sound, rather like someone sawing wood. Almond was the first to recognise it, and he stifled a titter.

"That Bund snoring?" whispered Hyde.

"Yes," breathed Almond; "dreaming how he wiped my eye, perhaps. Wait till he wakes."

"Not so much funniness," Hyde responded, giving him a gentle push towards the attic stairs. "'Ware wire."

They were half-way up when they were suddenly arrested by a slight movement on the stairs below. Stilling themselves and bating their breath, they paused in apprehension. Something was moving softly across the landing.

"It's a cat," declared Almond in a hushed voice. "I can hear it purring."

"Yes," agreed Hyde. "Go on."

"Make your flesh creep?"

"Aye," with a sigh. "I'm looking for something unexpected, knowing Bund."

"It'll be here if it's anywhere, then," rejoined Almond, throwing a light on the door before them, which both knew gave entrance to the "fence's" treasure-house.

It was quite an ordinary-looking door, but they examined it with suspicious minuteness.

"Seems to me," whispered Hyde, "that he's just trusting to his luck that nobody'll rob him. Bar the Chubb lock, this is a 'walk-in.'"

"May be some electric connections at the jamb."

"Yes, I know. We'll take it off the hinges not to disturb anything like that."

With muffled tools, scarcely making a sound that could be heard on the lower landing, they set to work. In something short of ten minutes both hinges were cut out

and the door pressed open wide enough for Almond to squeeze into the room to disconnect any electric wires that might give an alarm.

"Nothing," he declared, seeing none, and lifting the door he set it aside against the wall.

"Then I don't understand it," said Hyde, entering cautiously. "'Tisn't like Bund to have a fortune in a loft and put no more safeguards on it than a Chubb lock. It's uncanny, Alf."

"There's that cat behind you," remarked Almond. "Not liking dogs, perhaps he keeps a watch-cat. Mind! It'll bite."

As he spoke titteringly, the cat, a large tabby, brushed sinuously against Hyde's legs and then, as if hearing a call, cantered across the attic, to disappear behind a couple of the massive chests, of which there were, perhaps, a dozen in the room.

Almost at the same moment the whirr of an electric-bell in the distance startled the two men. For a moment they stood spell-bound; then Hyde flung round and strode soft-footed on to the landing.

"Telephone," exclaimed Almond in a hoarse whisper, stealing after him. "I expect he's got a telephone in his bedroom and somebody's rung him up."

"It was in there," Hyde whispered.

"Couldn't be anything else. Neither of us was moving when it rang. Stick it out. He'll answer it, and settle down again in a few minutes."

"Stop your gab, and listen!"

With ears and eyes strained to catch the slightest vibration of the air, they held their breath, expecting to hear the "fence's" deep voice, husky with sleep, answering the untimely call. But there was not a sound now the bell had ceased shrilling.

"Must have woke him," declared Almond in an anxious undertone. "Hear him snoring?"

"No. . . . not now."

"If he comes out on to the landing, he cuts us off."

"Let's hop," sighed Hyde, edging towards the stairs, but pausing at a sound. Somebody with a light, steady hand had opened a door on the landing below, to peer into the darkness or to listen.

"Yes," said a harsh, feminine voice in calm, subdued accents, "there's somebody there. I can't miss them if they come down, but look sharp: it's cold.

Hyde turned on his hips, and snatching at Almond, drew his head down.

"Get back—hide!" he breathed. "Watch your chance—take him by surprise."

An instant later a light flashed up in the bedroom facing the stairs, silhouetting the figure of a tall woman standing in the half-open doorway, and as Hyde shrank back into the attic, the woman stepped aside, throwing the door wide to a huge man in nightshirt and trousers, with an electric lantern in his hand.

"Give me that," he ordered roughly, evidently meaning the revolver with which the woman had been keeping guard while he slipped into his trousers. "Get in, and shut the door."

Fearlessly, and flooding the staircase with light, he mounted, and Hyde, holding his hands up in token of surrender, showed himself in the silvery stream pouring into the attic.

"All right, Mr. Grocutt!" he exclaimed. "It's a fair cop, and I'm not armed."

For a second the great, fleshy man paused on the threshold, looming ponderously in the reflected light; then, with a laugh, he entered.

"Why, you don' say it's you, Wal?" he said. "Are you alone?"

"No," answered Hyde. "I've got a pal in a taxi waiting for me."

"Then you expected to get away with my stuff in bulk!" chuckled Grocutt. "Well, I didn't think you were so green. But you took the door down, then?"

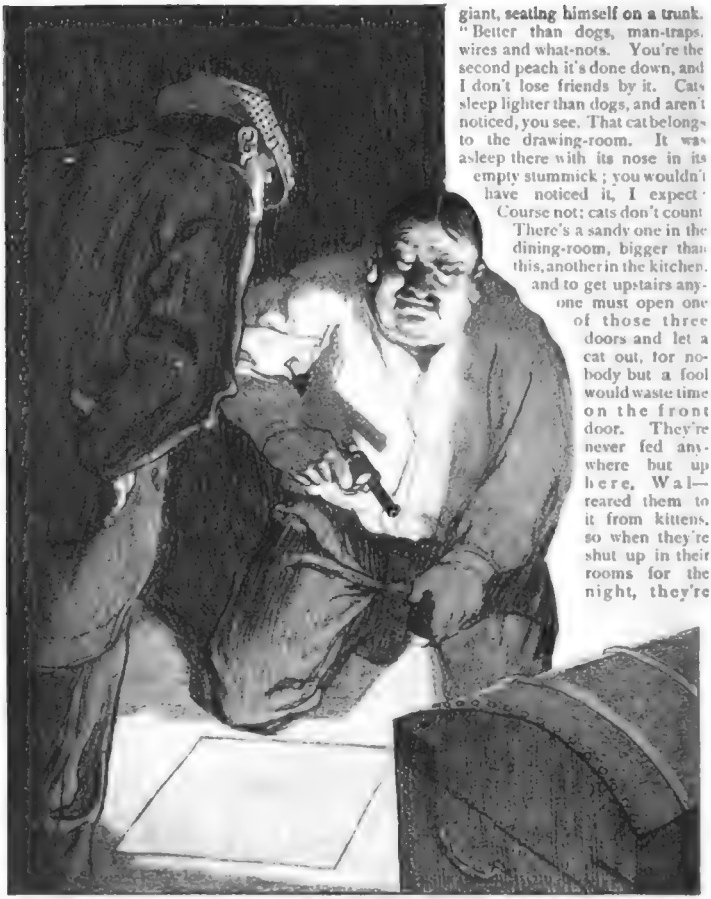
"I was afraid of wires."

The other laughed indulgently, and wagged his revolver.

"We're friends, Wal," he said—"old friends who understand each other, and there's no need to fall out over this. Not much harm done, and I can take the cost of that door out of our next deal. But, of course, if I'd caught you getting away with the goods, I should have dropped you—with this, if necessary. I've got to protect my interests, as the law won't. Understand? I'm good-natured, but I'm not chicken-hearted. That's me."

"I'm more amused than not it should be you, Wal; I really thought you knew too much to fancy I slept with my head in a sack of flour. Bless my soul, you can't think I've been dealing all these years, and left myself at the mercy of the first silly blighter that chances along! No, boy. Oh, so you came through the drawing-room, did you? Nice cat, isn't it?"

Seeming a trifle bewildered, Hyde looked down and round, and perceived the tabby cat



He went down on one fat knee and turned the light upon a two-foot metal plate let into the floor. "That's what does it . . . . when the plate's depressed either way, it completes the circuit and rings the bell."

rubbing itself against the edge of a trunk and licking its jaws.

"Strike me, Bund," he said solemnly, divining that the cat was somehow concerned, "how's it done?"

"You might wonder!" chuckled the fat giant, seating himself on a trunk. "Better than dogs, man-traps, wires and what-nots. You're the second peach it's done down, and I don't lose friends by it. Cats sleep lighter than dogs, and aren't noticed, you see. That cat belongs to the drawing-room. It was asleep there with its nose in its empty stummick; you wouldn't have noticed it, I expect. Course not; cats don't count. There's a sandy one in the dining-room, bigger than this, another in the kitchen, and to get upstairs anyone must open one of those three doors and let a cat out, for nobody but a fool would waste time on the front door. They're never fed anywhere but up here, Wal—reared them to it from kittens, so when they're shut up in their rooms for the night, they're thinking of their empty stummicks, and what's up here.

"When you came out of the drawing-room, Tiger there came too and followed you up, and—well, the short of it is you couldn't get in here without letting in one of the cats.

and being hungry, as we keep them at nights, of course, it makes for where it knows it will find food—on the plate it can't reach without ringing an electric bell at the head of my bed. Well, that happens, and out I pop before you can force one of these trunks. Quite simple."

"Quite simple," repeated Hyde dully

"And, of course," Grocutt concluded, "when I'm at my door with this in my hand, there's no getting away with the stuff."

"Well, I do admire you," said Hyde, with an exaggerated smile. "No discredit in being beaten by a man as clever as you. It's consoling. Cats, of course, sleep more by day than night, and can see in the dark. Wonderfully clever, Bund. D'you know, I half expected you'd be too good for me, but felt I'd like to try it. And the plate?—how does it work?"

"I'll show you," Grocutt rejoined, pleased and flattered, and rising, led the way across the attic. "Don't mind showing anybody, because nobody could put it out of gear without letting out a cat or killing the cat, and you couldn't—there, you see."

He went down on one fat knee and turned the light upon a two-foot metal plate let into the floor.

"That's what does it. I can't show you, as I expect the missus is asleep again by now and it would wake her, but the food goes under that clip, and when the plate's depressed either way, it completes the circuit and rings the bell. See here."

As he laid down the revolver to have a hand at liberty, Hyde picked it up quickly.

"Drop that!" growled Grocutt threateningly, but as he made an effort to rise, Almond, who had crept up behind, pounced upon him, wrapped an arm round his throat, and hugged him so suddenly that he reeled back and sat down with a heavy thud. At the same instant, Hyde, taking no chances and having little pity in his mental make-up, winded him by a sharp blow in the stomach, which silenced him before he could cry out.

"Keep his feet off the plate!" panted Almond. "And get the cord off that trunk!"

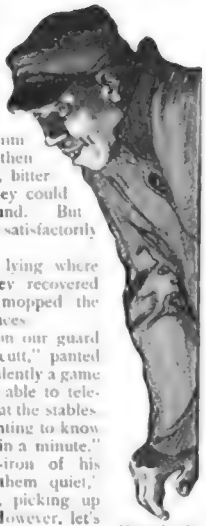
Forcing the gasping Bund flat on his back, Almond pinned him down by kneeling on his chest, and stuffed a handkerchief into his mouth.

"Cut it," he hissed to Hyde, who was having trouble with a knot of the cord they wanted. "I can't hold him long. . . Cut it, hang you! I tell you I can't hold him."

"Got it now. Half a moment."

"Leave it! If he——"

In another instant the big man would have flung Almond off and have been on his feet, but Hyde came in the nick of time and bore him down again, and then there was a quiet, bitter struggle before they could get Grocutt bound. But bound he was, and satisfactorily gagged.



Almond, who had crept up behind, pounced upon him.

They left him lying where he was while they recovered their breath and mopped the sweat from their faces

"We must be on our guard against Mrs. Grocutt," panted Hyde. "She's evidently a game sort, and may be able to telephone to the man at the stables. She'll sure be wanting to know what's happening in a minute."

"This barking-iron of his ought to keep them quiet," rejoined Almond, picking up the revolver. "However, let's get busy."

"Hadn't we better sit him up?" Hyde asked, glancing askance at the human mound that still struggled on the floor. "Fat chap—heart may be weak. Help me hoist him, Alf. We don't want any corpses on our hands. Keep him away from that plate. A 'cute trick that, eh?"

They dragged the purple-faced Grocutt into a corner and sat him up in the angle, and if looks could have killed, his eyes would have slain them.

"You did me over that necklace, Bund Grocutt," declared Almond in self-justification, "and I'm going to have my own back, with a bit of interest. You can sit there thinking what you'll do to us later on, but let me remind you——"

"Come on," urged Hyde impatiently, and turned to the nearest trunk.

"Let me remind you," persisted Almond in a threatening tone to Grocutt, "that if you squeal it'll go worse for you than for us; the law mayn't love us chaps, but it *hates* 'fences.' if we got five years, you'd get ten, and if you lived it out——"

"Cut it out and come on!" snarled Hyde exasperatedly. "He knows all that. This wants a cold chisel."

"Bund!" called a voice up the stairs, and Hyde and Almond caught their breath and scowled at each other in quick alarm. "Is it all right? . . Bund."

"Yes, Mrs. Grocutt, it's all right in a way," Hyde answered abruptly, flinging to the door; "that is to say, your husband's hurt himself, though I don't think it's much."

"What! Who are you?" came the voice harshly.

"Hide—quick!—don't let her see you, and get her arms as she comes in," whispered Hyde, pushing Almond towards the corner near the door. "Gently, but get her.

"He tripped and fell," he added aloud, moving so as to screen Almond and draw her attention at once to himself.

"Was it you, then?" she demanded aggressively, appearing gaunt and ghost-like at the head of the stairs. "You dirty, mean thief. And what have you done to him?"

"He's over here, ma'am. I haven't——"

Quickly he clapped a hand over her mouth, as Almond darted forward and embraced her from behind.

She was a hard-faced, shrewish woman, singularly tall and angular, and her long, striped dressing-gown made her look reedishly tall. But she had strength and the advantage of being a woman. Unlovely though she was and battling like a fury, they could not treat her with the roughness they had served out to Grocutt, whose purple face with its starting eyes was visible over one of the trunks. She screamed and bit, and kicked and writhed. But after a second or two Hyde had her gagged, and in a trice he tore the hem off her dressing-gown and bound her arms behind her.

Sit quiet she would not. Twice they hurried her into a corner and pressed her into a sitting posture, but as they turned away she struggled to her feet.

"Break her blessed neck, if we don't tie her ankles," declared Almond desperately.

The words were magical. She instantly became passive. Whether the risk to her neck alarmed her neither Hyde nor Almond considered nor cared. Enough for them that she shrank down into the corner and sat there without moving while they forced open a couple of trunks, and loaded themselves with valuables.

Then a bell rang somewhere downstairs—a common clanging bell, like a door-bell.

Hyde's smile vanished, and Almond, with a little gasp, turned pale.

"What the blazes was that?" he whispered hoarsely, and looked over his shoulder at Mrs. Grocutt.

Hyde swore under his breath.

"That cat, I expect," he said, and, stretching his neck, looked over the trunk at Bund. "What was that, Bund?—cat again, was it?"

Grocutt's eyes had widened strangely, and he rolled his head and seemed to swallow with great difficulty.

"Was that that cat?" Almond demanded darkly. Mrs. Grocutt shook her head with vigour, and made a slight movement to rise.

Then the bell rang again—louder this time.

"Somebody brought stuff to deal," Almond suggested eagerly, his face expressing the exquisite relief the idea occasioned him.

"Suppose her screams couldn't have been heard in the stables?" queried Hyde, always pessimistic.

"Slip down into the bedroom and look through the window."

Hyde hesitated for a moment, glancing anxiously from Bund to Mrs. Grocutt; then he sped from the room.

"Somebody come to deal stuff?" Almond asked the woman, an appealing quality in his voice.

She shook her head and nodded.

"No—yes. Which d'you mean?"

Again she shook her head and nodded.

"Mean 'perhaps,' do you?" he asked.

She nodded.

Almond sighed gratefully, and glanced down at the bundles of valuables set around.

But Hyde cut short his relief by racing up the stairs.

"Scoot!" he cried hoarsely, flinging wildly into the room as the bell rang louder than before and loud knocking sounded from the hall. "It's a raid! Police!—come to raid Grocutt!"

"Liar!" shouted Almond, hopeful to the last.

"Tell you it is!" raved Hyde, flinging about distractedly. "Moon's up, and I saw five of them as plain as my hand!"

"Gosh!" Almond gasped, and made a spring towards the door. But the sound of hurrying, heavy feet downstairs drove him back.

"Found that unlatched window!" wailed Hyde. "What'll we do?"

"Put that away!" commanded Almond, snatching the revolver from him as he caught it up, and he thrust it into hiding in one of the open trunks, for, confused as his mind was, he yet had sense enough to realise bad

might be made infinitely worse if they were caught with firearms.

As Mrs. Grocutt reared herself to her feet in her corner, only, however, to stumble to her knees, two cats came cantering up the stairs—a sandy cat, and a black and white one following hard behind.

Heedless of everything they dashed into the attic and set up a shrill whirring in Grocutt's bedroom, just as heavy-footed men came hurrying up from the hall, playing the light of their lanterns before them.

"Stay there, Andrew!—nobody to pass!" shouted a voice on the stairs. "Grocutt! Where are you? May as well show up; we've got you."

"We're up here," answered Hyde regretfully. "All of us. The straight goods, too. Our luck's out."

"Liar!" roared Almond passionately. "We came to see Grocutt, and found him and his wife up here—like this, and these bundles——"

"Oh!" said the foremost of the three police-officers filling the doorway. "Well, 'tall events you're here, and that's the main thing."

It is only fair to Griselda Hyde to add that the raiding of Grocutt's that night was due solely to chance.

"Was it you, then?" she demanded aggressively, appearing gaunt and ghost-like at the head of the stairs.

My Lady Beautiful

III.—THE CARE OF THE HANDS AND ARMS.

By Mary Marsh.

Every woman knows the attraction of lovely hands and arms, and would fain possess them. The following article, by a well-known beauty expert, gives valuable hints as to how they may be beautified and kept beautiful by means of simple home treatment.

"Now that you are aiming at being your own Beauty Doctor," said the Specialist to the Novice, "whatever you do, don't neglect the care of your hands. It is of little or no use to beautify your face, or to strive to retain a good figure if you go and mar the whole effect by coarse, rough, ugly hands disfigured by badly-kept nails."

"But," said the girl from the country, "what with playing golf and gardening, somehow it seems useless to try and keep my hands lily-white. I've had to let them get red and have given up having them attended to simply because there is nobody within a ten mile radius who can manicure, while the water at home is so hard that even washing them three or four times a day, the skin gets rough and red and loses all its smoothness. There's nothing plays greater havoc with one's hands than the constant use of hard water," she added despairingly.

"Yet with a very little care and attention such a state of affairs can so easily be remedied," persisted the Specialist firmly, "and your hands kept smooth and beautiful to the end of your life. Just as with washing your face so with washing your hands, the first thing you have to do is to procure pure rain-water, and when this is quite out of the question then use distilled or specially softened water.

"After all, nothing is easier than to soften hard water. The simplest way is to get a small muslin bag full of oatmeal and squeeze this thoroughly into the water before beginning operations; only be careful that the bag is emptied daily, as oatmeal very soon turns sour after it is once wetted, and when sour it is not only disagreeable to use, but of no value as a water softener.

"Another remedy that works wonders in keeping one's hands in good condition is always to have a small ewer of rain-water standing on one's washstand. This must be treated daily with a teaspoonful of borax and a quart of freshly-mixed gruel made of starch and oatmeal. Before washing the hands mix a little of this in boiling water, using sufficient to make the water warm instead of hot, for hot water, like that which is too cold, is very bad for the hands, making them red and blotchy."

"But my hands are so hopelessly red that nothing short of bleaching will cure them," said the Novice.

"Well, then, try my bleaching wash, which a great many women make a practice of using daily. This is made by mixing half-an-ounce of fresh chloride of lime

with three-quarters of a pint of soft water. This mixture should be put into a large bottle and it must be well shaken from time to time. The day after it has been mixed, drain off the clear portion and mix it with a quarter-of-a-pint of soft water, into which has previously been dissolved three and a-half drachms of crystallised carbonate of soda. Shake the mixture well and add a couple of spoonfuls of it to the water in which you wash your hands, and after a few weeks of this treatment even the roughest skin will become white and beautifully soft.

"Also don't forget that the use of the purest and best soap is also an essential factor in keeping one's hands in good condition. Indeed, you cannot be too careful in the choice of toilet soap, as it is an easy matter to disfigure one's hands permanently by using common, highly-scented soap or soap containing soda or other ingredients that, while possessing cleansing properties, crack the skin and produce a roughness that takes weeks to cure.

"Of course, what I recommend for daily use is jelly soap," he went on. "This is easily made by melting down pieces of the purest soap or the little bits left over from big cakes, providing that these are of the best quality. When the soap has been shredded and melted, add a little pure glycerine and a few drops of peroxide of hydrogen, which will act as a bleach.

"The best way to wash the hands is to soak them for three or four minutes in specially softened tepid water into which a small quantity of jellied soap has been dissolved. This makes the skin thoroughly soft and loosens every particle of dirt. After the soaking, soap very thoroughly with jellied soap and then dry in a very old linen towel, the softest procurable. When you've done this, use a second towel so as to make sure that all moisture is absorbed. This is particularly essential in winter, as the cold weather is liable to make the skin rough and likely to chap."

"But how about hands that are moist and clammy," put in the Novice, "or those covered with wrinkles?"

"Moist and clammy hands should be lightly powdered after washing with a little Fuller's earth or some finely-ground starch, while an oil bath is a wonderful remedy for hands that have been neglected or have become permanently aged and wrinkled through illness or neglect. This also helps to cure such disfigurements as protruding knuckles and outstanding veins—blemishes which can very often be overcome by a daily course of massage and liberal libations of oil and good skin food."

"An oil bath? What's that?" asked the girl.

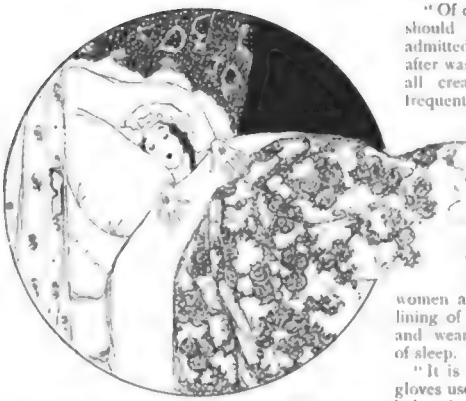
"Nothing very alarming. It is prepared by putting into a basin a quantity of sweet oil, which should previously be warmed. In this let each hand rest for at least a quarter-of-an-hour. Afterwards dry the hands very gradually before a fire, and then rub them all over with a lemon cut in half—a whole lemon being used for each hand.

"When this has been done, wash the hands in soft warm water, to which has been added some pure soap and a few drops of chloride of lime. Repeat these baths once a fortnight, and if the treatment is persisted in the ugliest hands will become plump and firm and beautifully white, defying the ravages of time."

"Isn't milk good also?" ventured the girl, now thoroughly interested.

"A buttermilk bath is also an excellent remedy, and does wonders in reviving hands that are disfigured by skin that has grown yellow or become so lined and wrinkled that it easily catches the dirt. The most efficacious treatment I know of consists in

An oil bath is splendid for the hands, and is prepared by putting a quantity of warm sweet oil into a basin. Each hand should be soaked in it for at least a quarter-of-an-hour.



An old pair of gloves, smeared inside with almond paste, and worn during the night, will work wonders in keeping the hands in good condition.

bathing the hands in fresh buttermilk for fifteen minutes or more, and then rubbing them with thick slices of cucumber, after which they should be dried by gently dabbing them with a fine cloth. This treatment should be practised at least once a week.

"Another way of whitening hands is to rub them once a day with a mixture composed of equal parts of glycerine and lemon juice to which has been added a pinch of borax. Indeed, lemon juice in any form is an excellent medium for whitening the hands, and it is a very good plan to keep half a lemon on one's washstand for rubbing over the skin. Care, however, must be taken not to use this at the same time as soap, or the effect will be spoilt."

"But lemon juice isn't a real bleach, is it?" asked the girl.

"If you want a more drastic way of making your hands white in a short time add a little peroxide of hydrogen to the water before washing, while an ounce-and-a-half of chloride of lime added to every pound of jellied soap is another good remedy. You must take care, though, to remove your rings before attempting to wash your hands in this mixture, as both the lime and the peroxide are injurious to jewellery, tending to discolour both gold and precious stones."

"But even when once my hands have been whitened, isn't it a tedious matter to keep them in good condition?"

"Of course, creams of various sorts should be rubbed into the skin," admitted her instructor, "especially after washing, but *do* be careful to use all creams with great care, as too frequent applications are apt to destroy the fresh, healthy appearance of the skin, and to make it flabby and unwholesome-looking. Almond paste applied at night time proves a valuable asset in keeping the hands in good condition, so much so that a great many women adopt the idea of smearing the lining of an old pair of gloves with it, and wearing them through the hours of sleep.

"It is very important, however, that gloves used for this purpose should have holes pierced in the palms and between the fingers so as to allow proper ventilation. After wearing gloves all night be sure to wash your hands very carefully the first thing in the morning, and, after drying, rub with fine oatmeal, and gently polish with a chamois leather."

"I ask you, what is the good of wearing gloves at night when your hands are as rough as mine; *look* at them!" And the Novice spread a disgraceful pair of hands on the table before her.

"The treatment of hands hardened by manual labour may not be an easy matter," admitted the Specialist, "but it is one that is not an impossibility provided you will devote to it the time and trouble that is necessary if the operation is to prove a success.

"One of the best ways to set to work is, before washing, to rub your hands all over with vaseline in order to loosen the dirt. The vaseline should be left to soak well into the skin for five or ten minutes, and when the hands are in as bad a condition as yours are, they should be gently massaged round the tips of the fingers and at the base and sides of the nails where the skin is roughest.

"Afterwards wipe off the vaseline and put your hands to soak in warm soapy water that has been thoroughly softened. Wash well with jellied soap and be very careful as to how you dry them—you cannot be too thorough. Another remedy, especially to be recommended if your hands are merely rough and coarse and your skin is not chapped or broken, is to cover them freely with a paste made of fine Indian meal and

vinegar. This must be very thoroughly rubbed into every part of the skin, after which the paste should be left on for half-an-hour before washing. When this operation has been performed, rub each hand lightly with glycerine diluted with rose-water.

"The trouble with your hands is, however, that your finger-tips have become so coarsened and ugly. You'd really better try the following treatment; though it is very tiresome and tedious to perform, you will find it well worth the trouble, as it produces marvellous results.

"Line the fingers of a loose pair of gloves with some almond paste, and after thoroughly soaking and washing your hands, slip the gloves on and wear them incessantly for a fortnight, only removing them once a day in order to soak and wash the hands. When that time is up make an excursion to town and have your nails very carefully manicured by a first-class manicurist, and then resume wearing the gloves treated with the paste for a good portion of every day.

"After a second treatment by the manicurist at the end of the next fortnight the cure should be complete, and the result will be that you will have lovely soft-tipped fingers with closely-fitting nails, instead of those that stand away from the skin, leaving a ridge to collect the dust and dirt, a state of affairs that very often is the direct result of using a nail-brush. This toilet accessory does far more harm than good, as any good manicurist will maintain.

"Speaking of manicuring, by the way, reminds me of how much this American treatment has done of recent years towards making well-shaped and well-polished nails the order of the day. Still, as in the case of so many Beauty cures, more harm than good has often been done by the ignorant amateur manicurist who has set to work and practised upon her own hands without having any training or experience. Such people would do far better to do as you really ought, and have their nails treated once a fortnight by an expert manicurist at the cost of one shilling a time, rather than spend large sums of money on a set of implements that enables them to inflict daily torture and injury upon their nails."

"Couldn't I ever learn to do it myself?" pleaded the Novice. "You don't realise how awfully expensive it is going to town each time to have it done."

"Well," said the Specialist grudgingly, "I suppose a few practice lessons might help you to set to work in the right way, but don't for heaven's sake go and spend a fortune on an elaborate manicure set. The professional manicurist always buys her tools separately, and sees that each one is of the best kind procurable.

"The chief things that you really require are a pair of sharp curved scissors, a bone or ivory trimmer, a steel file, a packet of emery

There is no need to waste money on an elaborate manicure set. The tools should be bought separately, and should be of the best quality. A very necessary item is a pot of good cold cream.

boards, and a bundle of pointed orange sticks; the other items include a pot of cold cream, a box of polishing powder, a stick of polishing rouge, bleaching fluid, and a couple of large chamois leather polishing pads.

"Thus equipped you may set to work by first filling a small glass finger bowl with a preparation of specially softened soapy water. Into this each hand should be placed for a few minutes, and, after being dried, the next thing to do is to file the nails, shaping them to a rounded oval that corresponds with the contour of the finger-tips. Then take the scissors and trim the loose skin all round the finger-tips, and press back the cuticle at the base of the nail with the ivory trimmer, so as to preserve the half moon, which is such an addition to a well-shaped nail. This must be done while the nail is soft after the soaking. The skin all round the nail must likewise be treated, care being taken not to break it but to give it a good contour.

"Next remove any dirt that may be under or round the nail with a little of the bleaching fluid. This should be applied with a tiny piece of cotton round the tip of one of the orange sticks, the rest of the nail being cleaned with a little soap and water applied in the same manner. When the nail is perfectly shaped and quite clean, and any skin that may have grown over it has been pushed back under the cuticle, dry it; then rub on a little of the polishing rouge, sprinkle some polishing powder on the chamois pad, and rub well till the nail is highly polished.

"Repeat this process on every nail on either hand, then wash your hands and give the nails an extra polish with the clean chamois pad. The effect of this treatment if properly carried out will be found to have greatly enhanced the beauty of your hands."

"You are a brick to have given me such implicit instructions," said the girl. "I suppose you could not tell me anything about the care of the arms, could you?"

"A few simple exercises, the application of good bleaching lotions, constant bathing, and gentle massage indulged in daily are all that are required," said the Specialist graciously.

"One of the best exercises for improving the shape of the arms consists in grasping a light dumbell in the hand, and then stretching the arm out straight from the shoulder. This should be done twenty times every morning, and if persisted in makes the arms round and firm. Another exercise for rounding arms that lack plumpness is to devote ten minutes daily to kneading dough. Not only does this exercise develop the arms and make them a pretty shape, but the flour has a beneficial effect, tending to whiten and improve the skin.

"The elbow also should come in for special attention, as very often pretty arms are disfigured by red elbows, hard and rough at the joint. To prevent this you must take care never to rest the elbows upon a hard table—as you are doing at the present moment, while a cure may often be effected by a liberal massage with warm olive oil or good cold cream.

"To whiten red arms the same remedies recommended for whitening red hands may safely be applied, while down growing upon the arms may be removed by a good depilatory made up by a reliable chemist, as superfluous hairs upon the arms are removed with far less danger than hairs grown upon the face.

"And now I must really leave off for to-day—I've told you all my beauty secrets in this direction, and it only remains for you to carry them out! Next month I'm going to help you with your complexion."

IF YOU WANT A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION

be sure and read the September ROYAL, in which our Beauty expert will reveal some of her choicest secrets, and will tell you how to deal with the freckles and sunburn which are the legacy of departing summer.

ANOTHER SPLENDID STORY OF SPY HUNTING

The HOUSE of SUSPICION

By William Le Queux.

Once on the track of enemy spies, Harry Nettlefield, late Marconi operator and now employed by the Confidential Department of the Government, always manages to effect a capture. The following story describes how he and his companions solved the mystery of night signals flashed from the south coast across Kent, Sussex, and Surrey to London, and even beyond.

About six o'clock on the evening of the 17th of December, a big, grey, open car, containing three men, drew up at the kerb before the Criterion Restaurant, Piccadilly Circus, and waited there.

Men and boys about Piccadilly Circus were selling the evening papers briskly, for, on the previous night, the Germans had bombarded Scarborough, West Hartlepool, and Whitby, and the fiercest indignation had been aroused throughout the country by the manner in which Germany was making war upon women and children, while, each hour, fresh facts concerning the attack were being brought to light.

Wearing a heavy frieze motor-coat and cap, I came up Regent Street from Waterloo Place and, on turning the corner, found the car already there awaiting me. Major Kellaway, of the Military Operations Department, and two keen lieutenants of the Royal Naval Air Service accompanying him, had arrived at the rendezvous a little early.

All were in plain clothes, and as I came up, Day, the chauffeur, smiled in recognition.

I apologised to Kellaway for being late, but the Major, opening the door to admit me, said:

"That's all right, Nettlefield. We're rather early. I thought we'd start punctually, as we've a long way to go to-night, and the entertainment seems, according to the reports, to start somewhat early."

I got in between Kellaway and Lieutenant Anderson, who were seated in the back, and, having settled myself beneath the rug, we moved along Piccadilly, and were soon speeding in the direction of Richmond.

"I hadn't much time to explain the inquiry upon which we are going to-night," Kellaway said to me as we sat with our collars turned up against the biting east wind, "but the facts are briefly these:

"It appears that for fully a month past every night signals have been flashed from hill to hill from some point, or points, on the

south coast, across Kent, Sussex, and Surrey, to London, and away beyond. Dozens of reports have been sent in by persons who have witnessed the signals, and a number of officers have been spending whole nights watching, and have afterwards reported to the Department. At first it was thought that the signalling was being done by some of our own people, but it is now quite plain that over the hills of the three counties named there is a network of expert signallers, and that they are enemies!"

"Well, we must break up the line," I said.

"Exactly. But it will mean a good deal of patient watchfulness, and considerable tact."

"We can watch as patiently as most people," I laughed, whereupon he introduced me to the third officer, a tall, dark-complexioned, decidedly handsome young fellow named Geraid Hamilton-Dean.

The latter at once told me that he had been out on eight consecutive nights and seen the signals.

"Well," I said cheerily, "we will also see these signals, and find out who are the people responsible for them."

"My dear fellow," said Anderson, rather a short, fair man in glasses, "you'll find that more easily said than done! We've searched the whole countryside, and found nothing."

"Where are we going now?" I inquired.

"Up on to the Hog's Back—beyond Guildford," was Anderson's reply. "You'll be able to see a bit of the enemy's fun from there. We've spent night after night on top—and it's jolly cold, I can assure you."

A suggestion was made by Kellaway to have a snack to eat in Guildford before starting upon our night vigil, and this we did, arriving on that long road which runs on top of the high ridge known as the Hog's Back, soon after eight o'clock.

At a point about five miles from Guildford we put the car on to the grass at the road-side, switched off the lights, and advanced to the edge of the ridge on the left side of the road, where, by day, a wonderful view is obtained southward, right across the country, with its many ranges of blue hills.

Below, we could see the twinkling lights of many towns, villages, and isolated houses across a stretch of many miles, and more than once, as I watched, I mistook the flickering of a light for a signal in Morse code.

Until that night, when I strained my eyes in the darkness in the direction which Anderson and his brother-officer indicated, I never dreamt how easy it is to be deceived regarding night-signalling, and I realised at once how many of the reports which had been sent in to us by an indignant public in perfectly good faith were, no doubt, due only to a chimera of their imagination. A tree swaying in front of a light will make the light wink in the "shorts" and "longs" of the Morse, and once, as I stood there with my compass, I found myself reading signals from a street lamp which was, as I saw afterwards, being obscured from time to time by puffs of steam from the stationary engine of a railway train.

I suppose we must have been watching there in patience for a full hour, and were feeling very cold, when suddenly Anderson cried:

"There it is! Right away there on the top of the hill, above those five lights in a line—a railway platform."

We all looked in the direction he had indicated, and there, sure enough, was an intensely brilliant white light, slowly ticking out a message in our direction.

"Read it," urged Kellaway, "and let's confirm notes afterwards."

All of us strained our eyes and watched the dots and dashes deliberately sent, and by a hand which we thought somewhat amateurish. The "longs" were not always of the same length, nor were the "shorts."

But this is what we scribbled down in the darkness on scraps of paper:

> I. D. T. L. I. (pause) E. O. D. S. E. (pause) S. A. R. E. (pause) N. I. I. O. (pause) E. W. E. I (pause) O. N. E. I. O. (pause) A. S. I. E. (pause) N. O. W. S. (pause) N. R. D. O. F. (pause) S. N. (end of message).

For a full half-hour, though we watched, we saw nothing. All was dark.

"Now we can't make out where that light is shown," Anderson declared. "It signals night after night, and, though we've searched the spot both by night and by day, we can find no suspicious place. Our own belief is that somebody comes into the big wood, climbs to the summit of the hill, and shows the light from there."

"A very powerful light it is, too," Kellaway declared. "They signal to somebody in their neighbourhood, who passes it on in the direction of London."

"Can you de-code it, sir?" asked Anderson of the Major.

"Ah! we'll try," he replied. "When we

get into the light somewhere we'll see if we can make sense of it. Now, the enemy's spies use three different ciphers. Fortunately, we possess the key of all of them, so I expect we shall be able to make out this before long."

"It ought to tell us something interesting," I remarked. "It may be in the 'danger code.'"

The "danger code"—as it was known to us—was used for signals, and, while it was one of the most ingenious and intricate codes ever devised, in the sentence which formed its key was a warning of "danger." For three whole years it had defied every expert in ciphers, but at last the secret had, by months of patience, been unravelled by a man who had made a hobby of such problems, and now we were enabled to read the cipher messages with accuracy and ease.

Half-an-hour later we returned into Guildford, and, while the two officers of the Air Service chatted and smoked, I assisted the Major in de-coding the message.

To reveal here the key-sentence of the cipher used by German secret agents in our midst would—though I know how interesting it would be—unfortunately be of advantage to the enemy as betraying the extent of our knowledge of their methods. Further, the code would probably be changed at once.

In a quarter-of-an-hour we had decided that the flashes sent were in what we knew as the "danger code," and at once we began to write down the cipher, and against each letter we placed its alphabetic equivalent. At first we had some difficulty in dividing the message into words, but at last we were successful, and, to our surprise, we found it to be a message from the enemy's camp—a message which had come up from the sea, and was as follows:

"Submarine U 6 reports aircraft raid on ——— to-night."

We showed it to our companions, and then, after consultation, decided to cross the hill, which they said was called Pitch Hill, midway between there and Ewhurst. It was a full ten miles in a straight line, but, taking the road through Shalford, Wonersh, and Shamley Green, the distance was about sixteen miles, or more, before we pulled up the car at a fork of two unfrequented by-roads, one of which led through the woods to the summit of the hill, while the other ran back round the hill to Shere.

The whole hill was well wooded to the summit, and certainly would afford any signaller very good cover. But having switched off the lights in the car, and leaving Day in charge to sleep until our return, we all four set out upon a tour of inspection, conversing only in low whispers and treading upon grass wherever we could.

After half-an-hour's walk around the rising ground, we came to the conclusion that anybody on the hill-top could signal away to their heart's content without even being detected by a person below. Only when at a considerable distance across the valley could the flashes be seen.

The exact line over which the signals were sent was the valley in which lay Wonersh, Bramley, Broadwater, Compton, and Puttenham, for it was from above the latter place that we had observed the light.

The whole of that night we spent lurking in those dark woods. We separated, and kept a lonely vigil at various points, ever watchful for any flashes across the wide, dark valley which lay below us, and each hour meeting at an appointed rendezvous.

From the point where I was posted I had a view all over the pretty country from Holmwood, across Horsham as far to the west as Billingshurst and beyond, and as I sat upon a fallen tree trunk the east wind whistled mournfully above me and cut my cheeks like a knife.

In the darkness below showed a few distant lights of hamlets or villages, while the line of whiter lights at Ockley station were plainly visible, and the patch of illumination in the sky showed where lay the town of Horsham.

That night vigil proved a long and bitterly cold one. Our first inclination had been to search the wood at the summit of the hill thoroughly, but, on consultation, we had refrained from doing this, for fear lest we might disturb the persons whom we hoped to catch red-handed. Hence we remained there intending to discover the signallers when they descended the hill.

It was an exciting watch. I dared not light a cigarette for fear of attracting attention, so I sat there with the collar of my heavy overcoat turned up, my eyes ever fixed across the dark country below me.

At one o'clock we all met at a point prearranged, and reported. Nothing suspicious had been seen or heard. It seemed evident that the signaller, having executed his work that night, had left the wood before our arrival and gone home.

Again we returned to our posts, and again we met at two o'clock, all four of us feeling very cold and hungry.

"It's curious," Anderson whispered, "but most of the signals we've been seeing are all before midnight. About ten o'clock the whole countryside is alive with flashes sometimes. At first we thought some of our own troops were practising, but a general order was issued that no night-signalling should take place. Yet the signals we had seen never ceased."

"Thus proving them to be enemy signals," remarked Kellaway. "We must catch the fellow somehow, if you are quite certain the signals are made from here."

"We're certain of that. Signals have also been seen from Ranmore Common, above Dorking, from Blackdown Hill, near Haslemere, and other places, but this seems to be a fixed post which is at work nightly," replied Anderson.

"We must exercise the greatest caution to avoid being discovered," I said.

Having gone back to my post I was watching, with eyes and ears on the alert, when, of a sudden, at about a quarter to three, I saw, far away in the direction of Billingshurst, but beyond it, a bright light suddenly winking in my direction.

S. S. S. (pause) M. M. M.

Those were the letters I read.

I sprang to my feet breathlessly, and strained my eyes.

Thrice was the message—a call—repeated. Then all was darkness for a full five minutes.

Whoever was over there was calling the mysterious signaller, who was, no doubt, still concealed somewhere in the woods on the summit of the hill upon which we were. He had apparently kept to his post, waiting to take in any further signals and re-transmit them Londonwards.

Suddenly the signal, shining like a far-off star, began to wink out a message, but I did not take it down; all my interest was centred in locating the exact spot whence the light showed.

As it proceeded I dropped upon my knees behind a big fallen tree trunk, and, making a mark on the soft ground with my heels to indicate the exact position, I took the stout ash-stick I carried and laid it on the trunk in a direct line with the twinkling lights.

By this means I hoped, when dawn came, to be able to locate, by the line, the spot whence the mysterious signals had emanated.

About thirty words or so were sent, and of course re-transmitted by the watcher high above us—though we could not see—away across to the Hog's Back and so on to London—another enemy message, no doubt, regarding the movements of German aircraft.

My three companions, posted as they were at other points of the compass around the hill, did not, of course, see the flashes, but when we met at our rendezvous at three, I described what I had seen.

In view of the fact that our presence might give warning to the unknown signaller above us, we resolved to leave the spot noiselessly, and wait until daybreak.

This we did, and as soon as the dawn began to break I took the Major with me to the spot where my walking-stick was still lying. Then, kneeling behind it with field-glasses, I found that, through the grey haze, I could just distinguish a large white house, several windows of which were visible through a gap in the trees.

When Kellaway had followed my directions, and, with the glasses, found the windows, from one of which the light had undoubtedly showed, he said at once:

"We must go and see who lives there. It seems a big place, in the centre of a park. I wonder if we can find it on our map?"

He took out his ordnance map, and, spreading it out, we took measurements and angles, with the result that, ten minutes later, we decided that the spot was the same as that marked as Eccleston Place, which was situated beyond Billingshurst.

An hour later, having left Day with the car at a spot about three miles away, we all four walked briskly towards the house of suspicion.

Walking in pairs, at some distance from each other, we met several labourers on their way to work, for it was now rapidly growing light, and the world was already astir.

We came at last to handsome lodge gates and a fine, well-kept drive, which led through a wide, picturesque park, up to the mansion under suspicion. Whoever lived there was, no doubt, a person of considerable importance, and hardly likely to be engaged in signalling for the enemy.

"I think we've made a mistake," Kellaway said to me, as we sauntered past the red-brick lodge, with its high, twisted chimneys and latticed windows.

"Perhaps," I replied. "But I don't think I've mistaken the line. We shall see."

At some distance up the road as we skirted the oak boundary-fence of the park, we met a carpenter, with twisted apron,

She screamed hysterically, while the man, who was Johnsen, the supposed Swede, in an instant drew a heavy revolver, and, with a fierce imprecation in German, fired point-blank at Clotilde.

[Page 316, col. 2.]

carrying his tools, whereupon I stopped and, indicating the park, asked:

"Can you tell me who lives in here?"

"Mrs. Birkett, sir," was the man's reply as he stopped.

"Birkett? Has she lived here long?"

"Not very long, sir. She's a widow. Mr. Birkett died last year."

"Is she at home, do you know?"

"Oh, yes, sir. Mrs. Birkett and the children are there. I saw them yesterday, as I'm doing some work up at the house."

In an instant a suggestion flashed across my mind.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Perry, sir—George Perry."

For a moment I paused and looked straight into his face.

"You're an Englishman, Perry, aren't you?" I asked.

The man regarded me with considerable surprise as he replied in the affirmative.

"Well, if you will give your word of honour as an Englishman to betray nothing, I and my friend here, Major Kellaway, of the War Office, will take you into our confidence. We are making some secret inquiries and want your assistance."

"I'm quite ready to give you that, sir," was the man's reply. "You can trust me, and I'll swear not to say a word." He put down his tool-bag and became interested.

"Good," I said. "Now I want you to take me into the house this morning as your assistant. I might tell you that I and my three companions are officials at the War Office," and to convince him I showed him my official pass.

At first he seemed dubious, but, looking at him and seeing that he was the same build as myself, I suggested that he should take me home, lend me a suit of his clothes, a cap, and a carpenter's apron, and then I would go up to Eccleston Place and assist him.

With a little persuasion he consented. Then I took leave of Kellaway, after promising to meet him and the others at the hotel in Horsham at midday, while Perry turned back home to his cottage about two miles away, to which I accompanied him.

Shortly before nine o'clock, attired as a carpenter, and carrying a big bag of tools, I entered the great, old-fashioned mansion by the back way, being greeted by the servants as we passed through the kitchen premises, and then I followed my companion to the dining-room, where I found that he was engaged in repairing some of the oak-panelling that had the dry-rot.

The room was a fine, handsome one, luxuriously furnished, with carved overmantel and ceiling and two beautiful windows of stained glass.

While Perry was at work, the family had turned the smaller morning room into a dining-room. At my companion's instructions I pretended to busy myself mixing some stain when any of the servants passed, but, about ten o'clock, Mrs. Birkett, a fair-haired woman of thirty-two or so, looking rather handsome in her widow's garb, entered the room and wished us good-day, which greeting we both respectfully acknowledged. She fussily criticised Perry's work, and, having given some orders, retired.

"I'm glad she's gone," remarked my companion in an undertone. "None of the servants can get on with her. The nurse, a very ladylike young girl, left yesterday at a moment's notice, because she bullied her. I knew the girl before she came here. Her mother lives in Billingshurst."

Hardly had he spoken when a tall, rather wiry butler entered and crossed to the big sideboard to put away some plate. He did not deign to address us, and a few seconds later went out again.

"That chap's a foreigner, I'm sure," whispered Perry. "I don't like him at all. Mrs. Birkett keeps him, as he says he's Swedish. But he may be anything."

"Are you sure he's a foreigner?" I asked "He looks so English."

"You speak to him. He can't pronounce the word 'that.' I always think it's the test for a foreigner."

Perry was a shrewd person, I at once saw.

About half-an-hour later the butler, whose name, was Johnsen, re-entered, and at that moment I upset the tin of stain with which I was pottering.

In a moment the man grew furious, and in his excitement certainly pronounced "that" as "dat." Yet Johnsen was certainly a Scandinavian name. At sea we had had a good many Johnsens as sailors.

That morning, during the hours in which both of us pretended to work, I learnt several things. At eleven we were both given a glass of beer in the servants' hall, during which opportunity was afforded for gossip.

Briefly, I learnt the following facts: Mr. Birkett, a wealthy City merchant, had gone on a business visit to Cape Town a year before and had died there, leaving his widow and two little children. The widow, a few

months afterwards, took Eccleston Place, furnished, from Sir John Hollingdale Browne for three years. To Johnsen, the head-servant, the arrangement of nearly everything was left. He was head of the seven maid-servants and was eager in the interests of his widowed mistress. That was what I learnt. Yet, after all, it was hardly suspicious, because the late Mr. Birkett had been—the servants believed—a man of the highest integrity and personal honour, while his widow was already well in with the county society in the district and on visiting terms with the local gentry.

At two o'clock that day I entered the coffee-room of the hotel at Horsham, where my three friends were lunching and awaiting me. To them I repeated what I had seen and heard, and, after snatching a meal, we all four motored back to London.

That same evening Clotilde, my *fiancée* Clotilde, met me at the cosy little restaurant in Soho where we were sometimes in the habit of meeting, and I explained to her all the facts. Over the dinner-table we formed a rather elaborate plan of campaign—a plan which happily resulted five days later, in her becoming installed as nurse at Eccleston Place in the vacant situation of the girl who had lived at Billingshurst.

The situation was truly amusing. Clotilde who, personally, was very smart and chic in consequence of her cosmopolitan birth, had now developed into a demurely-dressed, and rather ignorant little person—just the kind of nurse which an over-bearing widow like Mrs. Birkett might employ.

It was arranged that she should telephone to my little flat which I had rented in Vernon Chambers, Southampton Row, if anything untoward should occur.

For a week we waited, but the telephone remained silent.

On the eighth day I motored down to Billingshurst, saw Perry, and after lounging about, came upon my well-beloved dressed in nurse's garb, with brown bonnet and veil, taking her two young charges for an airing.

I dared only speak with her a moment, lest we might be noticed by somebody connected with Mrs. Birkett's household.

"Nothing definite yet, Harry," she whispered to me. "There's grave suspicion. But I intend to make absolutely certain before I report to you."

"Right!" I replied in a low undertone. "Keep watchful, and 'phone me when you want us here. I trust you, dearest."

Though we could get nothing tangible from Clotilde, yet we were not inactive. We kept a nightly watch upon Eccleston Place for signals. Through official channels we had already established the truth of the message that an air raid had, on the night when we had read of it, actually been attempted on —, and thus it was known that these messages to the enemy in our midst were absolutely genuine. Our object was to break up the line of communication, and to reveal to the apathetic public that an ingenious and cleverly devised system of espionage was at work.

The signals were going on nightly, and, though we watched, we took no action because we wished to fix the one case on which we were engaged.

One afternoon, a fortnight later, my telephone rang in Vernon Chambers, and I rose at once to answer it.

In a moment I heard Clotilde's voice.

"Harry, is that you?" she inquired. "I'm at Horsham Post Office. Come down to-night, and wait in the park at the haystack near the clump of firs, about ten. Do you know where I mean?"

"The big stack in sight of the house?" I asked.

"Yes. Wait for me there at ten."

"All right, dearest," was my reply. "Anything else?"

"No, I'm in a hurry. Good-bye Harry dear." And she rang off.

Just before ten o'clock we left the car about a mile from the lodge and walked by a path we had discovered across the fields until we entered the great park and came to the appointed spot. There we all waited under the haystack, conversing only in whispers.

I suppose we had been there an hour and a half when, of a sudden, from one of the top windows a ray of dazzling brilliancy showed for perhaps a minute. Suddenly it began to flash the enemy call-signal in the direction of the unknown German secret agent stationed in the woods on Pitch Hill.

"There you are!" remarked the Major. "They're still at it!"

"I wish Clotilde would come," I said. "I wonder what she has to report?"

The message, which was in code, was only a brief one. It had come first from the sea to the coast, and was being flashed from point to point right across England, for watchers in Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Yorkshire, and Northumberland had read nightly the same messages which we had been reading while watching.

As we looked it ceased abruptly, leaving the house again in complete darkness, and as

no other lights ever showed at the windows we had come to the conclusion that they had purposely been fitted with extra blinds of dark holland to guard against becoming too conspicuous in the night landscape.

We watched for a further half-hour.

Both Anderson and Dean were impatient, and were for relinquishing the vigil. Clotilde was nearly three hours late in keeping her appointment.

"I fancy you must have misunderstood her, Nettlefield," Dean remarked. "She might have meant to-morrow night."

"No. She told me to-night. Of that I'm quite positive," I replied. "It's evident these people have no suspicions, or they would not still be signalling."

Hardly had the words left my mouth when we saw a dark figure moving noiselessly over the grass towards us. It was Clotilde.

The moment was a breathless one.

"Follow me, but make no sound," she whispered after greeting me. "All the servants have gone to bed, but be careful as we go up the stairs. They have just taken in a long signal from the other side of the house, and are about to re-send it to London."

"Look!" I exclaimed, for even at that moment the beam of light, like a miniature searchlight, was showing from that same window.

Following Clotilde, we all four crept towards the back entrance of the house, which I knew well, and, aided by our little flash-lamps, noiselessly ascended the servants' staircase to the second floor, where we found ourselves in a well-carpeted corridor.

Whispering to us to make no noise, she led us to a closed door at the end of a long passage.

Inside the room two persons were conversing in German.

"*Ach!* Our Zeppelins will soon be over London. All is being prepared, and then the pigs will burn," I heard a man's voice exclaim. "Bombs have been dropped on Calais and on Dover an hour ago."

"Truly, Alberich, it will be a great and glorious sight! Our Fatherland will win. May God punish England!" a woman's voice responded. "Are you ready with the lamp? I will read. Ah, see!" she cried. "He answers from Pitch Hill. He wants that last message repeated."

Next second we saw a flashing light around the crack of the door, and could hear the sharp click of a telegraph tapping-key.

A second later the Major whispered the word, and suddenly turning the handle of the door—which had not been locked—we all burst into the dark room, where Clotilde's quick fingers touched the electric-light switch revealing that, set upon a table in the window of the rather bare apartment, stood one of the most approved type of powerful electric signal-lamps, with its key, a code-book, and signal-pad lying by its side.

So startled was the woman—who proved to be the widow Mrs. Birkett—by our sudden entry that she screamed hysterically, while the man, who was Johnsen, the supposed Swede, in an instant drew a heavy revolver and, with a fierce imprecation in German, fired point-blank at Clotilde, whom he at once realised had been the means of betraying their secret.

In an instant all four of us fell upon him and disarmed him, though not before he had succeeded in firing a second shot, directed at myself, whom he no doubt recognised as the inoffensive carpenter who had assisted the man Perry. Neither shot, however, struck us, and very soon we had both Mrs. Birkett and her butler secured.

The Major then told them that he was a military officer, that they were under arrest, and that he should telephone for a military guard from Horsham.

From the lips of both prisoners there poured a torrent of vulgar abuse in German upon the head of Clotilde, who, however, somewhat upset them by declaring:

"This pair, Harry, are a particularly precious couple of individuals. This man, posing as Johnsen, the butler, is none other than Alberich Burchardt, a Prussian officer, while this so-called Mrs. Birkett is his wife, who has so cleverly passed herself off as an English widow. They only came here after the outbreak of war, renting the place furnished for the sole purpose of establishing a signal-station. Since I've been here I've learnt a good many things that will prove very interesting at the trial."

And certainly the evidence Clotilde gave later on before the military court regarding the house of suspicion was of a most remarkable character, and by reason of it, coupled with the offence in which we had caught the pair red-handed, the sentences passed upon each were well-deserved ones of seven years' penal servitude.

(Another story in this thrilling series, dealing with the capture of enemy spies, will appear next month.)

THE SUMMER GIRL ON HER OWN

By Dorothy Rose.

No summer would be complete without the Summer Girl, but this year there will be few adoring swains to bask in her smiles and pay her homage. The true Summer Girl would not have it otherwise, and the following article shows how she will rise to the occasion and make the best of her "Adam-less" summer.

This month the Summer Girl comes into her own, but for the first time in history she reigns alone, with no flannelled consort to squire her on river and beach, and minister to her with ices and chocolates. No longer will the River Girl spend frenzied afternoons trying to obtain a frock that will not shriek when in company with the shirt of prostrating pink chosen by her particular boy for river wear, for he is garbed in khaki, and is wielding the rifle with the same energy, if less skill, than the punt-pole.

As for the Seaside Girl, she will probably pay a few shillings less for her bathing-dress, since mixed bathing will be as blameless and uninspiring as a district-visitors' meeting. She may even choose one which will stand getting wet, unless her holiday is to be spent at a naval base, in which case her costume may be warranted to bring to the surface all submarines within half-a-mile.

But the Summer Girl, though she may at times choose to appear as fragile as a *soufflé* and as helpless as an infant in arms, is in reality made of sterner stuff, and may be trusted to decorate the landscape, and pursue the quest of health and fresh air with unflagging zeal. There will be picnics as usual this year, and the Summer Girl will cheerfully shoulder the tea-baskets and fill the kettles, and glory in the knowledge that the masculine muscle once at her disposal is now even more worthily employed.

And if at times the thought of Bertie, whose lilac shirt and immaculate flannels were the joy of her heart, and who was seriously upset if cream was not forthcoming for his tea, standing knee-deep in mud and making sketchy meals of bread and jam, is too much for her—well, the Summer Girl will not whine. Instead she will powder her nose and blink away a tear, and remark that after all, men are clumsy creatures, and will Dora give her the recipe for this gingerbread, so that she can make some for Bertie?

There is a certain type of Summer Girl whose existence apparently depends on the presence of men; she is never seen without a gilded youth laden with offerings of chocolates, cushions, and nosegays, and a flotilla of disconsolate swains in the offing. Girl friends as a rule she would have none of—they refused homage to her dimples, and it was always possible they might have naturally wavy hair or wear real silk stockings instead of the spun silk variety.

To this kind of Summer Girl the summer of 1915 will mean a complete upheaval. Flouted girl friends will not look very kindly upon overtures of peace, and may expect her to do a share of the washing up at picnics, or to carry her own wet bathing-dress after the morning dip.

This year the summer will be to the capable Summer Girl, the girl who can handle

her own boat on the river, can carry a picnic basket without collapsing, and who can enjoy fresh air, exercise, and *al fresco* meals without a background of white flannels and Panamas. There will be few vacancies for those who can only loll on the cushions of a punt or adorn the promenade, but the active girl who will turn up her sleeves and wield a punt-pole or coax a spirit stove into a good humour will be as much to the fore as ever.

The unattached Summer Girl who sheds admirers at the end of the season like a tree its leaves, and bursts forth with a fresh crop next summer, is after all not so much to be pitied. But the engaged Summer Girl bereft of her *fiancé* is quite another matter. She has often lost touch with her girl friends, and to her loneliness is added anxiety for the safety of her khaki-clad lover.

Take the case of Ruth, as charming a Summer Girl as ever flaunted white muslin on the river, or, in sports coat and short skirt, ordered a young man about for his good on the golf-links. Saturdays and Sundays always found them imbibing fresh air and sunshine together; now the Army has claimed him, and Ruth's lips tremble as she scans the casualty lists, and she chooses her summer frocks listlessly since *he* will not be there to reward her efforts with:

"By Jove! What a stunning frock! I hope it doesn't crease easily because I simply must—and don't pretend you don't like it, because you do!"

There will be many girls like Ruth this summer, who, because they have lost their sweethearts, will lose their outings also, unless the girls whose pleasures they shared before their engagement days, hold out a welcoming hand.

Of course, there will be fewer outings this summer, but once the Summer Girl has resigned herself to the scarcity of men, they will be easier to arrange. Men were always the deciding factor in a picnic, and many promising expeditions have been postponed because Ted was booked for every Saturday in July, or Herbert couldn't possibly get away in time to join the party for tea.

The bathing costume of the Season Girl who spends her holidays at a naval base will be one calculated to bring to the surface all submarines within half-a-mile.

There are people who will scout the idea of "outings as usual," and who apparently imagine that to partake of tea and cake out-of-doors instead of at a decorously spread table is an immoral proceeding, and likely to prejudice our chances of victory.

"How you girls can expect picnics this year I don't know!" wailed one worthy dame when her daughter overhauled the tea-basket. "There's Reggie living on bread and jam, and not had a bath for weeks, and you talk about sandwiches and chocolate cake!"

And not all her daughter's eloquence could convince her that to consume sandwiches in the woods was quite as harmless

It will be a dreary summer for the girl who, scorning girl friends, was never seen without a gilded youth laden with chocolates, cushions, and posegays, and a gang of disconsolate swains in the offing.

as to eat roast beef in the dining-room, and that the most rigorous abstinence from food would not secure for Reggie the much-coveted bath.

The Summer Girl can safely be trusted to content herself with simple pleasures this year, but she is sensible enough to recognise that to shut herself up at home and abstain from all gaiety is a sure road to the "blues." Cheerfulness is not always easy nowadays, and if it can be obtained at the price of a few hours on the river or a visit to the pierrots, well—where's the harm?

If there is to be any brightness this summer it will be largely owing to the Summer Girl, for with the coming of sunshine and washing frocks she will scintillate as of yore, and if her gaiety is a little forced, it will be none the less infectious. For her irresponsible light-heartedness has always been one of her chief charms, and at her laugh hoary-headed old men longed for their youth, and grandmas wiped regretful tears from their eyes.

The hall-mark of the Summer Girl has hitherto been her bodyguard of men whom she collected with an ease that would turn a recruiting sergeant blue with envy. Now that is changed, for a bodyguard, however small, will be open to suspicion, and she will soon tire of explaining that Bobbie has false teeth and would never be able to eat hard biscuit, and that Algy has several sets of new silk underwear which he must wear out before he can enlist.

The engaged girl whose *fiancé* is at the front will choose her summer frocks listlessly, since he will not be there to praise and admire them.

So the Summer Girl will hold sway even this year, and if her piqués and muslins are no longer companioned by sweaters and blazers, she will be none the less attractive for that. If her spirits are a little less exuberant, her mien a trifle more sober, who shall blame her? Even the Summer Girl has a heart—though up to now it has not always been apparent—and this summer, if ever, she will find it.

A THRILLING STORY OF JUSTICE IN THE BACKWOODS.

JIM *The* BACKWOODS POLICE DOG

II.—THE BOOK-AGENT AND THE BUCKSKIN BELT.

By Charles G. D. Roberts.

The maintenance of law and order in the backwoods needs a man of iron nerve and determination. Such a man was Tug Blackstock, Deputy-Sheriff of Nipiwaska County. The following story tells how, with the aid of his sagacious police dog, *Jim*, he succeeded in bringing a criminal to justice.

I.

A big-framed, jaunty man with black side-whiskers, a long black frock coat, and a square, flat case of shiny black leather strapped upon his back, stepped into the Corner Store at Brine's Rip Mills.

He said: "Hullo, boys! Hot day!" in a big voice that was intentionally hearty, ran his bulging eyes appraisingly over everyone present, then took off his wide-brimmed felt hat and mopped his glistening forehead with a big red and white handkerchief. Receiving a more or less hospitable chorus of grunts and "hullos" in response, he seated himself on a keg of nails, removed the leather case from his back, and asked for ginger beer, which he drank noisily from the bottle.

"Name of Byles," said he at length, introducing himself with a sweeping nod. "Hot tramp in from Cribb's Ridge. Thirsty, you bet. Never drink nothing stronger'n ginger pop or soft cider. Have a round o' pop on me, boys. At pop this o' yours, mister. A dozen more bottles, please, for these gentlemen."

He looked around the circle with an air at once assured and persuasive. And the taciturn woodsmen, not wholly at ease under such sudden cordiality from a stranger, but too polite to rebuff him, muttered "Thank ye,

kindly," or "Here's how," as they threw back their heads and poured the weak stuff down their gaunt and hairy throats.

It was a slack time at Brine's Rip, the mills having shut down that morning because the river was so low that there were no more logs running. The shrieking saws being silent for a little, there was nothing for the mill hands to do but loaf and smoke. The hot air was heavily scented with the smell of fresh sawdust mixed with the strong honey-perfume of the flowering buckwheat fields beyond the village. The buzzing of flies in the windows of the store was like a fine arabesque of sound against the ceaseless, muffled thunder of the rapids.

The dozen men gathered here at Zeb Smith's store—which was, in effect, the village club—found it hard to rouse themselves to a conversational effort in any way worthy the advances of the confident stranger. They all smoked a little harder than usual, and looked on with courteous but non-committal interest while he proceeded to unstrap his shiny black leather case.

In his stiff and sombre garb, so unsuited to the backwoods trails, the stranger had much the look of one of those itinerant preachers who sometimes busy themselves with the cure of souls in the remoter backwoods settlements. But his eye and his address were rather those of a shrewd and pushing commercial traveller.

Tug Blackstock, the Deputy Sheriff of Nipsiwaska County, felt a vague antagonism toward him, chiefly on the ground that his speech and bearing did not seem to consort with his habiliments. He rather liked a man to look what he was or be what he looked, and he did not like black side whiskers and long hair. This antagonism, however, he felt to be unreasonable. The man had evidently had a long and tiring tramp, and was entitled to a somewhat friendlier reception than he was getting.

Swinging his long legs against the counter, on which he sat between a pile of printed calicoes and a box of bright pink fancy soap, Tug Blackstock reached behind him and possessed himself of a box of long, black cigars. Having selected one critically for himself, he proffered the box to the stranger.

"Have a weed?" said he cordially. "They ain't half bad."

But the stranger waved the box aside with an air at once grand and gracious.

"I never touch the weed, thank you kindly just the same," said he. "But I've nothing agen it. It goes agen my system, that's all. If it's all the same to you, I'll take a bite o' cheese an' a cracker 'stead o' the cigar."

"Sartain," agreed Blackstock, jumping down to fetch the edibles from behind the counter. Like most of the regular customers, he knew the store and its contents almost as well as Zeb Smith himself.

During the last few minutes an immense, rough-haired black dog had been sniffing the stranger over with suspicious minuteness. The stranger at first paid no attention whatever, though it was an ordeal that many might have shrunk from. At last, seeming to notice the animal for the first time, he recognised his presence by indifferently laying his hand upon his neck. Instead of instantly drawing off with a resentful growl, after his manner with strangers, the dog acknowledged the casual caress by a slight wag of the tail, and then, after a few moments, turned away amicably and lay down.

"If Jim finds him all right," thought Blackstock to himself, "ther' can't be *much* wrong with him, though I can't say I take to him myself." And he weighed off a much bigger piece of cheese than he had at first intended to offer, marking down his indebtedness on a slate which served the proprietor as a sort of day-book. The stranger fell to devouring it with an eagerness which showed that his lunch must have been of the lightest.

"Ye was sayin' as how ye'd jest come up from Cribb's Ridge?" put in a long-legged, heavy-shouldered man who was sprawling on a cracker box behind the door. He had short sandy hair, rapidly thinning, eyes of a cold grey, set rather close together, and a face that suggested a cross between a fox and a fish-hawk. He was somewhat conspicuous among his fellows by the trimness of his dress, his shirt being of dark blue flannel with a rolled-up collar and a scarlet knotted kerchief, while the rest of the mill hands wore collarless shirts of grey homespun, with no thought of neckerchiefs.

His trousers were of brown corduroy, and were held up by a broad belt of white dressed buckskin, elaborately decorated with Navajo designs in black and red. He stuck to this adornment tenaciously as a sort of inoffensive proclamation of the fact that he was not an ordinary backwoods mill hand, but a wanderer, one who had travelled far, and tried his wits at many ventures in the wilder West.

"Right you are," assented the stranger, brushing some white cracker crumbs out of his black whiskers.

"I was jest a-wonderin'," went on Hawker, giving a hitch to his belt and leaning forward a little to spit out through the doorway, "if ye've seed anything o' Jake Sanderson on the road."

The stranger, having his mouth full of cheese, did not answer for a moment.

"The boys are lookin' for him rather anxious," explained Blackstock with a grin. "He brings the leetle fat roll that pays their wages here at the mill, an' he's due some time to day."

"I seen him at Cribb's Ridge this morning," answered the stranger at last. "Said he'd hurt his foot, or strained his knee, or something, an' would have to come on a bit slow. He'll be along some time to-night, I guess. Didn't seem to me to have much wrong with him. No, ye can't have none o' that cheese. Go 'way an' lay down," he added suddenly to the great black dog, who had returned to his side and laid his head on the stranger's knee.

With a disappointed air the dog obeyed.

"'Tain't often Jim's so civil to a stranger," muttered Blackstock to himself.

A little boy in a scarlet jacket, with round eyes of china blue, and an immense mop of curly, fluffy, silky hair so palely flaxen as to be almost white, came hopping and skipping into the store. He was greeted with friendly grins, while several voices drawled, "Hullo, Woolly-Billy!" He beamed cheerfully upon the whole company, with a special gleam of intimate confidence for Tug Blackstock and the big black dog. Then he stepped up to the stranger's knee, and stood staring with respectful admiration at those flowing jet-black side-whiskers.

The stranger in return looked with a cold curiosity at the child's singular hair. Neither children nor dogs had any particular appeal for him, but that hair was certainly queer.

"Most an albino, ain't he?" he suggested.

"No, he ain't," replied Tug Blackstock curtly. The dog, detecting a note of resentment in his master's voice, got up and stood beside the child, and gazed about the circle with an air of anxious interrogation. Had anyone been disagreeable to Woolly-Billy? And if so, who?

But the little one was not in the least rebuffed by the stranger's unresponsiveness.

"What's that?" he inquired, patting admiringly the stranger's shiny leather case.

The stranger grew cordial to him at once.

"Ah, now ye're talkin'," said he enthusiastically undoing the flap of the case. "It's a book, sonny. The greatest book, the most *interestin'* book, the most useful book—and next to the Bible the most high-toned, uplifting book that was ever written. Ye can't read yet, sonny, but this book has the loveliest pictures ye ever seen, and the greatest lot of 'em for the money."

He drew reverently forth from the case a large, fat book, bound sumptuously in embossed sky-blue imitation leather, lavishly gilt, and opened it upon his knees with a spacious gesture.

"There," he continued proudly, "It's called 'Mother, Home, and Heaven!' Ain't that a title for ye? Don't it show ye right off the kind of book it is? With this book by ye, ye don't need any other book in the house at all, except maybe the almanack an' the Bible—an' this book has lots o' the best bits out of the Bible in it, scattered through among the receipts an' things to keep it all wholesome an' upliftin'.

"It'll tell ye such useful things as how to get a cork out of a bottle without breakin' the bottle, when ye haven't got a corkscrew, or what to do when the baby's got croup, and there ain't a doctor this side of Tourdulac. An' it'll tell ye how to live, so as when things happen that no medicines an' no doctors and no receipts—not even such great receipts as these here ones" (and he slapped his hand on the counter) "can help ye through—such as when a tree falls onto ye, or you trip and stumble onto the saws, or git drawn down under half-a-mile o' raft—then ye'll be ready to go right up aloft, an' no questions asked ye at the Great White Gate.

"An' it has po'try in it, too, reel *heart* po'try, such as'll take ye back to the time when ye was all white an' innocent o' sin at yer mother's knee, an' make ye wish ye was like that now. In fact, boys, this book I'm goin' to show ye, with your kind permission, is handier than a pocket in a shirt, an' at the same time the blessed fragrance of it is like a rose o' Sharon in the household. It's in three styles o' bindin', all *reel* handsome, but——"

"I want to look at another picture now," protested Woolly-Billy. "I'm tired of this one of the angels sayin' their prayers."

His amazing shock of silver-gold curls was bent intently over the book in the stranger's lap. The woodsmen, on the other hand, kept on smoking with a far-off look, as if they heard not a word of the fluent harangue. They had a deep distrust and dread of this black-whiskered stranger, now

that he stood revealed as the Man-Wanting-to-Sell-Something. The majority of them would not even glance in the direction of the gaudy book, lest by doing so they should find themselves involved in some expensive and complicated obligation.

The stranger responded to Woolly-Billy's appeal by shutting the book firmly. "There's lots more pictures purtier than that one, sonny," said he. "But ye must ask yer dad to buy it fer ye. He won't regret it." And he passed the volume on to Hawker, who, having no dread of book-agents, began to turn over the leaves with a superior smile.

"Dad's gone away ever so far," answered Woolly-Billy sadly. "It's an awfully pretty book." And he looked at Tug Blackstock appealingly.

"Look here, mister," drawled Blackstock, "I don't take much stock myself in those kind of books, an' moreover (not meanin' no offence to you), any man that's sellin' 'em has got to larn to do a sight o' lyin'. But as Woolly-Billy here wants it so bad I'll take a copy, if 'tain't too dear. All the same, it's only fair to warn ye that ye'll not do much business in Brine's Rip, for there was a book agent here last year as got about ha'f the folks in the village to sign a crooked contract, and we was all stung bad. I'd advise ye to move on, an' not really tackle Brine's Rip fer another year or so. Now, what's the price?"

The stranger's face had fallen during this speech, but it brightened at the concluding question.

"Six dollars, four dollars, an' two dollars an' a half, accordin' to style of bindin'," he answered, bringing out a handful of leaflets and order forms and passing them round briskly. "An' ye don't need to pay more'n fifty cents down, an' sign this order, an' ye pay the balance in a month's time, when the books are delivered. I'll give ye my receipt for the fifty cents, an' ye jest fill in this order accordin' to the bindin' ye choose. Let me advise ye, as a friend, to take the six dollar one. It's the best value."

"Thanks jest the same," said Blackstock drily, pulling out his wallet, "but I guess Woolly-Billy'd jest as soon have the two-fifty one. An' I'll pay ye the cash right now. No signin' orders fer me. Here's my name an' address."

"Right ye are," agreed the stranger cordially, pocketing the money and signing the receipt. "Cash payments for me every time, if I could have *my* way. Now, if some o' you other gentlemen will follow Mr. Blackstock's fine example, ye'll never regret it—an' neither will I."

"Come on, Woolly-Billy. Come on, Jim," said Blackstock, stepping out into the street with the child and the dog at his heels. "We'll be gittin' along home, an' leave this gentleman to argy with the boys."

II.

Jake Sanderson, with the pay for the mill-hands, did not arrive that night, nor yet the following morning. Along toward noon, however, there arrived a breathless stripling, white-faced and wild-eyed, with news of him. The boy was young Stephens, son of Andy Stephens, the game-warden. He and his father, coming up from Cribb's Ridge, had found the body of Sanderson lying half in a pool beside the road, covered with blood. Near at hand lay the bag, empty, slashed open with a bloody knife. Stephens had sent his boy on into the Settlement for help, while he himself had remained by the body, guarding it lest some possible clue should be interfered with.

Swift as a grass fire, the shocking news spread through the village. An excited crowd gathered in front of the store, everyone talking at once, trying to question young Stephens. The Sheriff was away, down at Fredericton for a holiday from his arduous duties. But nobody lamented his absence. It was his deputy they all turned to in such an emergency.

"Where's Tug Blackstock?" demanded half-a dozen awed voices. And, as if in answer, the tall, lean figure of the Deputy Sheriff of Nipsiwaska County came striding in haste up the sawdusty road, with the big, black dog crowding eagerly upon his heels.

The clamour of the crowd was hushed as Blackstock put a few questions, terse and pertinent, to the excited boy. The people of Nipsiwaska County in general had the profoundest confidence in their Deputy Sheriff. They believed that his shrewd brain and keen eye could find a clue to the most baffling of mysteries. Just now, however, his face was like a mask of marble, and his eyes, sunk back into his head, were like points of steel. The murdered man had been one of his best friends, a comrade and helper in many a hard enterprise.

"Come," said he to the lad, "we'll go an' see." And he started off down the road at that long loose stride of his, which was swifter than a trot and much less tiring.

"Hold on a minute, Tug," drawled a rasping nasal voice.

"What is it, Hawker?" demanded Blackstock, turning impatiently on his heel.

"Ye hain't asked nothin' yet about the Book-Agent, Mister Byles, him as sold ye 'Mother, Home, an' Heaven.' Mebbe *he* could give us some information. He *said* as how he'd had some talk with poor old Jake."

Blackstock's lips curled slightly. He had not read the voluble stranger as a likely highwayman in any circumstances, still less as one to try issues with a man like Jake Sanderson. But the crowd, eager to give tongue on any kind of a scent, and instinctively hostile to a book-agent, seized greedily upon the suggestion.

"Where is he?" "Send for him." "Did anybody see him this mornin'?" "Rout him out!" "Fetch him along!" The babel of voices started afresh.

"He's cleared out," cried a woman's shrill voice. It was the voice of Mrs. Stukeley, who kept the boarding-house. Everyone else was silent to hear what she had to say.

"He quit my place jest about daylight this morning," continued the woman virulently. She had not liked the stranger's black whiskers, nor his ministerial garb, nor his efforts to get a subscription out of her, and she was therefore ready to believe him guilty without further proof. "He seemed in a powerful hurry to git away, sayin' as how the Archangel Gabriel himself couldn't do business in this town."

Seeing the effect her words produced, and that even the usually imperturbable and disdainful Deputy Sheriff was impressed by them, she could not refrain from embroidering her statement a little.

"Now ez I come to think of it," she went on, "I did notice as how he seemed kind of excited an' nervous like, so's he could hardly stop to finish his breakfus'. But he took time to make me knock half-a-dollar off his bill."

"Mac," said Blackstock sharply, turning to Red Angus MacDonald, the village constable, "you take two of the boys an' go after the Book Agent. Find him, an' fetch him back. But no funny business with him, mind you. We hain't got a spark of evidence agin him. We jest want him as a witness, mind."

The crowd's excitement was somewhat damped by this pronouncement, and Hawker's exasperating voice was heard to drawl:

"No *evidence*, hey? Ef that ain't *evidence*, him skinnin' out that way afore sun-up, I'd like to know what is!"

But to this and similar comments Tug Blackstock paid no heed whatever. He hurried on down the road toward the scene of the tragedy, his lean jaws working grimly upon a huge chew of tobacco, the big, black dog not now at his heels but trotting a little way ahead and casting from one side of the road to the other, nose to earth. The crowd came on behind, but Blackstock waved them back.

"I don't want none o' ye to come within fifty paces of me, afore I tell ye to," he announced with decision. "Keep well back, all of ye, or ye'll mess up the tracks."

But this proved a decree too hard to be enforced for any length of time.

When he arrived at the place where the game-warden kept watch beside the murdered man, Blackstock stood for a few moments in silence, looking down upon the body of his friend with stony face and brooding eyes. In spite of his grief, his practised observation took in the whole scene to the minutest detail, and photographed it upon his memory for reference.

The body lay with face and shoulder and one leg and arm in a deep, stagnant pool by the roadside. The head was covered with black, clotted blood from a deep knife-wound in the neck. Close by, in the middle of the road, lay a stout leather satchel, gaping open, and quite empty. Two small memorandum books, one shut and the other with white leaves fluttering, lay near the bag. Though the roadway at this point was dry and hard, it bore some signs of a struggle, and toward the edge of the water there were several little, dark, caked lumps of puddled dust.

Blackstock first examined the road minutely, all about the body, but the examination, even to such a practised eye as his, yielded little result. The ground was too hard and dusty to receive any legible trail, and, moreover, it had been carelessly over-trodden by the game-warden and his son. But whether he found anything of interest or not, Blackstock's grim, impassive face gave no sign.

At length he went over to the body, and lifted it gently. The coat and shirt were soaked with blood, and showed marks of a fierce struggle. Blackstock opened the shirt, and found the fatal wound, a knife-thrust which had been driven upwards between the ribs. He laid the body down again, and at the same time picked up a piece of paper, crumpled and blood stained, which had lain beneath it. He spread it open, and

for a moment his brows contracted as if in surprise and doubt. It was one of the order forms for "Mother, Home and Heaven."

He folded it up and put it carefully between the leaves of the note-book which he always carried in his pocket.

Stephens, who was close beside him, had caught a glimpse of the paper, and recognised it.

"Say!" he exclaimed, under his breath. "I never thought o' *him!*"

But Blackstock only shook his head slowly, and called the big black dog, which had been waiting all this time in an attitude of keen expectancy, with mouth open and tail gently wagging.

"Take a good look at him, Jim," said Blackstock.

The dog sniffed the body all over, and then looked up at his master as if for further directions.

"An' now take a sniff at this." And he pointed to the rifled bag.

"What do you make of it?" he inquired when the dog had smelt it all over minutely.

Jim stood motionless, with ears and tail drooping, the picture of irresolution and bewilderment.

Blackstock took out again the paper which he had just put away, and offered it to the dog, who nosed it carefully, then looked at the dead body beside the pool, and growled softly.

"Seek him, Jim," said Blackstock.

At once the dog ran up again to the body, and back to the open book. Then he fell to circling about the bag, nose to earth, seeking to pick up the elusive trail.

At this point the crowd from the village, unable longer to restrain their eagerness, surged forward, led by Hawker, and closed in, effectually obliterating all trails. Jim growled angrily, showing his long white teeth, and drew back beside the body as if to guard it. Blackstock stood watching his action with a brooding scrutiny.

"What's that bit o' paper ye found under him, Tug?" demanded Hawker vehemently.

"None o' yer business, Sam," replied the deputy, putting the blood-stained paper back into his pocket.

"I seen what it was," shouted Hawker to the rest of the crowd. "It was one o' them there dokyments that the book-agent had, up to the store. I always *said* as how 'twas him."

"We'll ketch him!" "We'll string him up!" yelled the crowd, starting back along the road at a run.

"Don't be sech fools!" shouted Blackstock. "Hold on! Come back I tell ye!"

But he might as well have shouted to a flock of wild geese on their clamorous voyage through the sky. Fired by Sam Hawker's exhortations, they were ready to lynch the black-whiskered stranger on sight.

Blackstock cursed them in a cold fury.

"I'll *hev* to go after them, Andy," said he, "or there'll be trouble when they find that there book-agent."

"Better give 'em their head, Tug," protested the warden. "Guess he done it all right. He'll git no more'n's good for him."

"*Maybe* he did it, an' then agin, maybe he didn't," retorted the Deputy, "an' anyways, they're jest plump looney now. You stay here, an' I'll follow them up. Send Bob back to the Ridge to fetch the coroner."

He turned and started on the run in pursuit of the shouting crowd, whistling at the same time for the dog to follow him. But to his surprise Jim did not obey instantly. He was very busy digging under a big whitish stone at the other side of the pool. Blackstock halted.

"Jim," he commanded angrily, "git out o' that! What d'ye mean by foolin' about after woodchucks a time like this? Come here!"

Jim lifted his head, his muzzle and paws loaded with fresh earth, and gazed at his master for a moment. Then, with evident reluctance, he obeyed. But he kept looking back over his shoulder at the big white stone, as if he hated to leave it.

"There's a lot o' ordinary pup left in that there dawg yet," explained Blackstock apologetically to the game-warden.

"There ain't a dawg ever lived that wouldn't want to dig out a woodchuck," answered Stephens.

III.

The black-whiskered stranger had been overtaken by his pursuers about ten miles beyond Brine's Rip, sleeping away the heat of the day under a spreading birch tree a few paces off the road. He was sleeping soundly—soundly indeed, as thought the experienced constable, for a man with murder on his soul.

But when he was roughly aroused and seized, he seemed so terrified that his captors were all the more convinced of his guilt. He made no resistance as he was being hurried along the road, only clinging firmly to his black leather case, and glancing with

wild eyes from side to side as if nerving himself to a desperate dash for liberty.

When he had gathered, however, a notion of what he was wanted for, to the astonishment of his captors, his terror seemed to subside—a fact which the constable noted narrowly. He steadied his voice enough to ask several questions about the murder—questions to which reply was curtly refused. Then he walked on in a stolid silence, the ruddy colour gradually returning to his face.

A couple of miles before reaching Brine's Rip, the second search party came in sight, the Deputy Sheriff at the head of it and the shaggy black form of Jim close at his heels. With a savage curse Hawker sprang forward, and about half the party with him, as if to snatch the prisoner from his captors and take instant vengeance upon him.

But Blackstock was too quick for them. The swiftest sprinter in the county, he got to the other party ahead of the mob and whipped around to face them, with one hand on the big revolver at his hip and Jim showing his teeth beside him. The constable and his party, hugely astonished, but confident that Blackstock's side was the right one to be on, closed protectingly around the prisoner, whose eyes now almost bulged from his head.

"You keep right back, boys," commanded the Deputy in a voice of steel. "The law will look after this here prisoner, if he's the guilty one."

"Fur as we kin see, there ain't no 'if' about it," shouted Hawker, almost frothing at the mouth. "That's the man as done it, an' we're agoin' to string 'im up fer it right now, for fear he might git off some way atween the jedges an' the lawyers. You keep out of it now, Tug."

About half the crowd surged forward with Hawker in front. Up came Blackstock's gun.

"Ye know me, boys," said he. "Keep back."

They kept back. They all *fell* back, indeed, some paces, except Hawker, who held his ground, half crouching, his lips distorted in a snarl of rage.

"Aw now, quit it, Sam," urged one of his followers. "T'ain't worth it. An' Tug's right, anyways. The law's good enough, with Tug to the back of it." And putting forth a long arm he dragged Hawker back into the crowd.

"Put away yer gun, Tug," expostulated another. "Seein's ye feel that way about it, we won't interfere."

Blackstock stuck the revolver back into his belt with a grin.

"Glad ye've come back to yer senses, boys," said he, perceiving that the crisis was over. "But keep an eye on Hawker for a bit yet. Seems to 'ave gone clean off his head."

"Don't fret, Tug. We'll look after him," agreed several of his comrades from the mill, laying firmly persuasive hands upon the excited man, who cursed them for cowards till they began to chaff him roughly.

"What's makin' you so sore, Sam?" demanded one. "Did the book-agent try to make up to Sis Hopkins?"

"No, it's Tug that Sis'is making eyes at now," suggested another. "That's what's puttin' Sam so off his nut."

"Leave the lady's name out of it, boys," interrupted Blackstock, in a tone that carried conviction.

"Quit that jaw now, Sam," interposed another, changing the subject, "an' tell us what ye've done with that fancy belt o' yourn 'at ye're so proud of. We hain't never seen ye without it afore."

"That's so," chimed in the constable. "That accounts for his foolishness. Sam *ain't* himself without that fancy belt."

Hawker stopped his cursing and pulled himself together with an effort, as if only now realising that his followers had gone over completely to the side of the law and Tug Blackstock.

"Busted the buckle," he explained quickly. "Mend it when I git time."

"Now, boys," said Blackstock presently, "we'll git right back along to where poor Jake's still layin', and there we'll ask this here stranger what *he* knows about it. It's there, if anywheres, where we're most likely to git some light on the subject. I've sent over to the Ridge fer the coroner, an' poor Jake can't be moved till he comes."

The book-agent, his confidence apparently restored by the attitude of Blackstock, now let loose a torrent of eloquence to explain how glad he would be to tell all he knew, and how sorry he was that he knew nothing, having merely had a brief conversation with poor Mr. Sanderson on the morning of the previous day.

"Ye'll hev lots o' time to tell us all that when we're askin' ye," answered Blackstock. "Now, take my advice an' keep yer mouth shet."

As Blackstock was speaking, Jim slipped in alongside the prisoner and rubbed against him with a friendly wag of the tail as if to say:

Up came Blackstock's gun. "Ye know me, boys," said he. "Keep back." They kept back. They all *fell* back, indeed, some paces, except Hawker, who held his ground, half crouching, his lips distorted in a snarl of rage.

"Sorry to see you in such a hole, old chap."

Some of the men laughed, and one who was more or less a friend of Hawker's, remarked sarcastically:

"Jim don't seem quite so discriminatin' as usual, Tug."

"Oh, I don't know," replied the Deputy drily, noting the dog's attitude with evident interest. "Time will show. Ye must remember a man ain't *necessarily* a murderer jest because he wears black side-lights an' tries to sell ye a book that ain't no good."

"No good!" burst out the prisoner, reddening with indignation. "You show me another book that's half as good, at double the price, an' I'll give you——"

"Shet up, you!" ordered the Deputy, with a curious look. "This ain't no picnic ye're on, remember."

Then someone, as if for the first time, thought of the money for which Sanderson had been murdered.

"Why don't ye search him, Tug?" he demanded. "Let's hev a look in that there black knapsack."

"Ye bloomin' fool," shouted Hawker, again growing excited, "ye don't s'pose he'd be carryin' it on him, do ye? He'd hev it buried somewheres in the woods, where he could git it later."

"Right ye are, Sam," agreed the Deputy. "The man as done the deed ain't likely to carry the evidence around on him. But all the same, we'll search the prisoner bime-by."

By the time the strange procession had got back to the scene of the tragedy it had been swelled by half the population of the village. At Blackstock's request, Zeb Smith, the proprietor of the store, who was also a magistrate, swore in a score of special constables to keep back the crowd while awaiting the arrival of the coroner. Under the magistrate's orders—which satisfied Blackstock's demand for strict formality of procedure—the prisoner was searched, and could not refrain from showing a childish triumph when nothing was found upon him.

Passing from abject terror to a ridiculous over-confidence, he with difficulty restrained himself from seizing the opportunity to harangue the crowd on the merits of "Mother, Home, and Heaven." His face was wreathed in fatuous smiles as he saw the precious book snatched from its case and passed around mockingly from hand to hand. He certainly did not look like a murderer, and several of the crowd, including Stephens, the game-warden, began to wonder if they had not been barking up the wrong tree.

"I've got the idee," remarked Stephens, "it'd take a baker's dozen o' that chap to do in Jake Sanderson that way. The skate as killed Jake was some man, anyways."

"I'd like to know," sneered Hawker, "how ye're going to account for that piece o' paper, the book-agent's paper, 'at Tug Blackstock found there under the body."

"Aw, shucks!" answered the game-warden, "that's easy. He's been a-sowin' 'em round the country so's anybody could git hold of 'em, same's you er me, Sam!"

This harmless, if ill-timed pleasantry, appeared to Hawker, in his excitement, a wanton insult. His lean face went black as thunder, and his lips worked with some savage retort that would not out. But at that instant came a strange diversion. The dog Jim, who under Blackstock's direction had been sniffing long and minutely at the clothes of the murdered man, at the rifled leather bag, and at the ground all about, came suddenly up to Hawker and stood staring at him with a deep, menacing growl, while the thick hair rose stiffly along his back.

For a moment there was dead silence save for that strange accusing growl. Hawker's face went white to the lips. Then, in a blaze of fury he yelled:

"Git out o' that! I'll teach ye to come showin' yer teeth at me!" And he launched a savage kick at the animal.

"JIM!! Come here!" rapped out the command of Tug Blackstock, sharp as a rifle shot. And Jim, who had eluded the kick, trotted back, still growling, to his master.

"Whatever ye been doin' to Jim, Sam?" demanded one of the mill hands. "I ain't never seen him act like that afore."

"He's *always* had a grudge agin me," panted Hawker, "coz I had to give him a lickin' once."

"Now ye're lyin', Sam Hawker," said Blackstock quietly. "Ye know right well as how you an' Jim were good friends only yesterday at the store, where I saw ye feedin' him. An' I don't think likely ye've ever given Jim a lickin'. It don't *sound* probable."

"Seems to me there's a lot of us has gone a bit off their nut over this thing, an' not much wonder, neither," commented the game warden. "Looks like Sam Hawker has gone plumb crazy. An' now there's Jim, the sensiblest dog in the world, with lots

more brains than most men-kind, foolin' away his time like a year-old pup a-tryin' to dig out a darn old woodchuck hole."

Such, in fact, seemed to be Jim's object. He was digging furiously with both fore-paws beneath the big white stone on the opposite side of the pool.

"He's bit me. I'll kill him," screamed Hawker, his face distorted and foam at the corners of his lips. He plucked his hunting-knife from its sheath, and leapt forward wildly, with the evident intention of darting around the pool and knifing the dog.

But Blackstock, who had been watching him intently, was too quick for him.

"No, ye don't, Sam!" he snapped, catching him by the wrist with such a wrench that the bright blade fell to the ground. With a scream, Hawker struck at his face, but Blackstock parried the blow, tripped him neatly, and fell on him.

"Hold him fast, boys," he ordered. "Seems like he's gone mad. Don't let him hurt himself."

In five seconds the raving man was trussed up helpless as a chicken, his hands tied behind his back, his legs lashed together at the knees, so that he could neither run nor kick. Then he was lifted to his feet, and held thus, inexorably but with commiseration.

"Sorry to be rough with ye, Sam," said one of the constables, "but ye've gone crazy as a bed-bug."

"Never knowed Sam was such a friend o' Jake's!" muttered another, with deepest pity.

But Blackstock stood close beside the body of the murdered man, and watched with a face of granite the efforts of Jim to dig under the big white stone. His absorption in such an apparently frivolous matter attracted the notice of the crowd. A hush fell upon them all, broken only by the hoarse, half-smothered ravings of Sam Hawker.

"'Tain't no woodchuck Jim's diggin' for, you see!" muttered one of the constables to the puzzled Stephens.

"Tug don't seem to think so, neither," agreed Stephens.

"Angus," said Blackstock in a low, strained voice to the constable who had just spoken, "would ye mind stepping round an' givin' Jim a lift with that there stone!"

The constable hastened to obey. As he approached, Jim looked up, his face covered thickly with earth, wagged his tail in greeting, then fell to work again with redoubled energy.

The constable set both hands under the stone, and with a huge heave turned it over. With a yelp of delight Jim plunged his head into the hole, grabbed something in his mouth, and tore around the pool with it. The something was long and whitish, and trailed as he ran. He laid it at Blackstock's feet.

Blackstock held it up so that all might see it. It was a painted Indian belt, and it was stained and smeared with blood.

For some moments no one spoke, and even the ravings of Hawker were stilled.

Then Tug Blackstock spoke, while everyone, as if with one consent, turned his eyes away from the face of Sam Hawker, unwilling to see a comrade's shame and horror.

"This is a matter now for jedge and jury, boys," said he in a voice that was grave and stern. "But I think you'll all agree that we hain't no call to detain this gentleman, who's been put to so much inconvenience all on account of our little mistake."

"Don't mention it, don't mention it," protested the book-agent, as his guards, with profuse apologies, released him. "That's a mighty intelligent dawg o' yours, Mr. Blackstock."

"He's sure done *you* a good turn this day, mister," replied the Deputy grimly.

(Another splendid story of Tug Blackstock and his faithful ally, Jim, appears in our next number.)

MAURICETTE.

Her lips were like the robin's breast,
Her voice came soft and slow;
But the wide seas roll between us now,
And that was long ago.

X.

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

Photo *M. Chapple.*

A unique notice which appears on a tree at the entrance to Broadstone Farm, Ashdown Forest.

THE MILITARY TOUCH.

THE war spirit pervades everything nowadays, and in the neighbourhood of camps it is not surprising to find the military touch greatly in evidence.

It has certainly cropped out in this notice fixed on a tree at the entrance to Broadstone Farm, Ashdown Forest, which, as a warning to trespassing "Tommies," should prove highly effective.

THE DARLING OF THE FRENCH ARMY.

THE French artillery has done magnificent work in the present campaign, its 75 centimetre guns having wrought tremendous havoc on the German lines.

The guns used by the French Army are made at the famous Creusot works, and their great superiority lies in their wonderful stability, which is such that a glass of water placed on the rim of the gun wheel remains unspilt after the gun has been fired.

The Creusot guns are also fitted with what are known as recuperators, by means of which the gun returns to its firing position automatically instead of having to be re-set. French officers are so expert that they can split a tree three miles off, once they have ascertained the range by means of a couple of shots.

Photo *Underwood & Underwood, London.*

One of the French 75 centimetre guns which, thanks to their stability and the accurate aim of the gunners, have done so much damage to the German lines.

The Mosque of St. Sophia is one of the most celebrated buildings in Constantinople, and although disappointing from the exterior, is magnificently decorated inside. St. Sophia was originally a church, but after the capture of the city by the Turks it was turned into a mosque.

Photo Newsom, Fleet Street
The Hilda Cowham Kiddies are the latest thing in dolls, and were elaborated by Miss Hilda Cowham, the famous artist—

Photo Active Photos,
—from the idea of Miss Violet Wilks, a little girl of ten, who is seen here playing with the dolls of her own devising.

HILDA COWHAM KIDDIES.

So many grotesque dolls have invaded Toyland lately, that it is quite a relief to find such quaint and charming little people as the latest comers, the Hilda Cowham Kiddies.

The idea originated with a little girl, Miss Violet Wilks, who is only ten years old, but full of originality. Having no childish companions, she manufactured these quaint dolls, which were afterwards elaborated by Miss Hilda Cowham, the well-known artist, on the lines of the long-legged, delightful children for which she is so famous.

Anything more fascinating than these toys it would be hard to find, for besides being practically life size, they are gaily dressed, and fitted with polished hardwood legs and feet, and are capable of standing in a variety of attitudes.

At the British Industries Fair they attracted a great deal of attention, and so won the heart of Queen Mary that she purchased several, including "Dainty Daphne," the little lady with the fan, who is second on the right in the top picture.

Real kiddies will welcome the Hilda Cowham Kiddies with open arms, for they make ideal playmates, and all sorts of "make-believe" games can be enjoyed with them.

WHO SAYS PANAMAS?

Anyone visiting Boreham Wood, in Herts, for the first time, might be pardoned for imagining they had discovered a new kind of Canterbury bell in the grounds of Mr. J. Cambi's bleaching works. Nearer investigation, however, would lead to the discovery that the supposed flowers were really Panama hats

When they arrive in this country Panama hats are a dirty brown in colour, and special treatment is required to give them the requisite whiteness. During the bleaching process they are hung on racks in the open air, and from a distance present a very curious appearance.

Photo Cowen & Mann
Panama hats have to undergo a special process in order to attain the requisite whiteness. Here they are seen bleaching at Mr. J. Cambi's bleach works, at Boreham Wood, Herts.

"A Holiday at Home"—Mr. Reg. P. Smith's suggestion for reproducing the joys of the seaside in the back garden.

ON THE CHEAP

Suggestions for Inexpensive Holidays, Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

By Lesbia Robinson.

The holiday question this summer is likely to be approached in a desultory "put it off till the last moment" spirit, for we live in an uncertain age, and there are alas! no cheap trains. Many of the old haunts now swathed in barbed wire and bristling with anti-aircraft guns, are inadvisable, though the absence of lights is not without attractions for the young and flighty.

For those whom reduced salaries prevent from seeking sea breezes as usual, the back garden is a passable substitute for the beach, provided that the family are naturally unselfish, and the neighbours of long-suffering dispositions. Otherwise dissension is likely to arise. Father will find that Bobbie has staked out his claim in the middle of his proposed putting green, and Fred will discover that the foot-bath which is to do duty as an ocean, has been placed in the middle of the strip of garden he had commandeered for a rifle range.

There are points about a holiday in bed, but only those possessed of exceptional moral courage or a doting mother, can afford to risk such extreme measures. Winnie Bliss possessed neither; nevertheless, at the beginning of her fortnight she purchased two much be-ribboned nightgowns and a supply of light fiction, and retired beneath the sanctity of her pink and white bedspread, bought specially for the purpose at an outlay of 4s. 11d.

At first all went well, and she revelled in

Mr. Bert Thomas reminds us that a camera flourished in the vicinity of forts or dockyards will insure a free holiday for any civilian suitably disguised.

the sensation of easeful days punctuated by tempting meal trays. Then the family, tired

A change of air and fresh surroundings on Dartmoor are within the reach of anyone who cares to take the necessary steps to secure them, or so says Mr. Alfred Leete.

of waiting on an able-bodied invalid, began to prove restive. They forgot the salt at dinner or the sugar at tea, and her impertinent flapper sister took a fiendish delight in bringing her the jam she most disliked and spilling her coffee into the saucer.

The climax came when a favourite uncle swooped down upon them to join him in a jaunt to Windsor. There were exactly twenty minutes to spare before they must leave for the station. Winnie's energy revived amazingly, and in fifteen minutes she was dressed—all but her shoes Hunt as she would, not a single pair could she find. Her mother took "threes," the flapper a healthy "six"—both equally impossible for her number four feet. To promenade Windsor in pink bedroom slippers was not to be thought of; therefore, she stayed behind, greatly sorrowing. It was not until she raided the larder in search of lunch that behind a sack of potatoes on the floor, she found her entire stock of footwear.

Only the existence of a flapper sister devoid of all moral sense could have explained such a calamity. Winnie, once dressed, decided to stay up and mete out justice, only to find herself forestalled by a relentless Providence, which had caused the flapper to consume veal and ham pie of doubtful ancestry, and be visited with much internal discomfort in consequence.

This is a summer when those who have kept on good terms with their country

Esmond pictures the easeful life in an internment camp, surrounded by divers luxuries in the way of cushions, light fiction, and cooling drinks.

cousins may expect to reap some benefit, and the chances are that many neglected relations living in rural spots will suddenly find themselves remembered by cousins and nieces in search of inexpensive holidays. If necessary, an invitation to town can be given to pave the way, coupled with the information that "we're not going to theatres just now for fear of Zeppelins, and we keep a respirator in every bedroom."

This should frighten off all female relatives and wring an invitation to exchange the perils of town for the peaceful seclusion of the country from all but the most flinty-hearted.

There are some people, of course, who will go away, as usual, and to them a holiday in the heart of the country, is to be recommended. It is difficult to spend money when one is five miles from the village shop and two miles from the nearest cart rut, and one is apt to resign oneself to do without many things when their acquisition involves a long tramp through a hot and shadeless road.

Mr. Thomas Henry advocates a farmhouse in the heart of the country, as a six mile walk to the nearest shop is an effectual bar to extensive shopping.

Even when an occasional bout of shopping is necessary in the interests of the commissariat, there is little to tempt the town-dweller, who is not accustomed to see bulls'-eyes, pickled-onions, china, and underwear dwelling amicably side by side, or to find his progress impeded by biscuit-tins and bales of scarlet flannel.

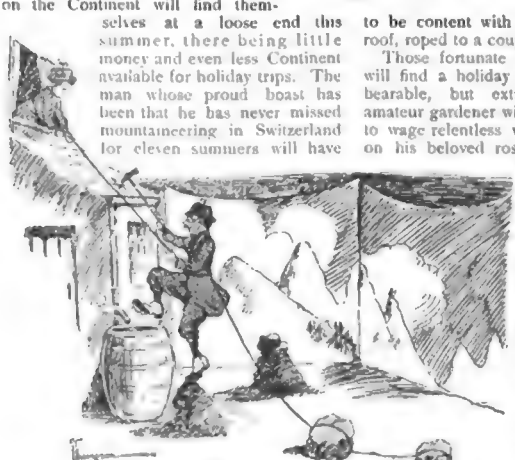
Holidays might, of course, be arranged on the exchange system, one member of a family being, as it were, swopped for a member of another family. In this way the town girl might obtain country air and an occasional new-laid egg, while the village maiden would have a chance to "do" the museums and replenish her wardrobe at the bargain basements. A good deal of discretion would have to be used in arranging matters, especially in the case of parents, otherwise much suffering might be caused to their innocent offspring. Probably the best plan would be to handle the families in bulk, and transplant them in their entirety from one dwelling to another.

The Seaside Girl is an expensive luxury, but the substitute suggested by Mr. Starr Wood has no extravagant whims.

Those who have always made a practice of spending their holidays on the Continent will find themselves at a loose end this summer, there being little money and even less Continent available for holiday trips. The man whose proud boast has been that he has never missed mountaineering in Switzerland for eleven summers will have to be content with scaling the wash-house roof, roped to a couple of obese boulders.

Those fortunate folks who have hobbies will find a holiday spent at home not only bearable, but extremely pleasant. The amateur gardener will consider it bliss untold to wage relentless war against the green fly on his beloved rose trees, and the ardent stamp collector will be able to mobilise his stamps without interruption. As for the camera fiend, he can wreak vengeance on all his worst enemies, and if he lives in a garrison town he has but to flourish his camera in the vicinity of forts and dockyards to obtain an even longer holiday than he had anticipated.

As for those unhappy people who have no hobby, they might do worse than spend their holidays in finding one.



"A-climbing We Will Go!"—Mr. Thompson depicts the man who, debarred from spending his holidays in Switzerland, attempts a little mild mountaineering at home.

WAR IS WAR

By

W Douglas Newton

"They Pass, and Smile, the Children of the Sword."

Even before it was dawn, the troops were under arms. In the first grey Puritan light of the day, they began to move out from the lines set secretly behind the hills.

Large masses of soldiery manœuvred ponderously, hugging cover with distinguished tenacity. Amid the early morning shadows they were but denser shadows put in with a fuller brush. An unintermittent shuffling went up from each of these masses, and a low droning murmur that might have been caused by anything from a bluebottle upward. Harness creaked, boots scraped, rifle-butts clattered. An epidemic of coughing was defying suppression.

Above each shadowy battalion brooded the shadowy figures of mounted officers. These officers looked down upon their men with heroic, if slightly contemptuous, optimism. It was obvious that each had before his eyes the greatest aggregation of fools in the division.

When the regiments reached the range of low hills screening the front, they halted. They waited, wondering what the blazes they were to do next, and when, and where. Also they engaged their minds in large problems. They wondered who would be champion of the First League Football this year.

The cavalry rode up jingling behind them, and came to a halt. The cavalry had lately discovered they were not at all useless, as the prophets had said, and they were full of beans and pride. Presently, after doing nothing for an hour, an order came, and some of them rode away again to do it elsewhere.

After this, movement got up all along the line. Standing troops began to quicken. Ripples of movement passed over their ranks. One after another, regiments swung off to do their work. About nine o'clock one gun went off with an appalling and sudden clap. Another followed at once. Before men could count ten, the whole valley was brimming over with the roar of battle. Rifle-firing had broken out in a frenzy at once. The discharge of the first field piece had been the signal for the loosing of every rifle in Northern France, it seemed.

As the Highlanders swung clear of the screening hills, the men could see most of what was happening. A great hill stood up like a cliff out of the sea in front of them. It was high, grim, unscalable, terrible. But it was not invulnerable. Over the summit of the hill, and against the sky, little white balls of shrapnel were already splitting and puffing in proof of this.

This summit of the hill was dense with massed Germans. They swarmed. The sky-line was black with them. Every crevice was glutted with them. The whole mass made a dramatic and stirring silhouette against the quick-moving sky. It looked like a crowd that had lined a height to witness a unique but splendid pageant.

The firing built up and up. A feint attack to the right got busy with a plunge. At once the men in this force were up to the neck in it with an ear-tingling rattle. The field-guns near the Highlanders jumped to their business of clearing the orchards and gardens that floored the valley. They were to nurse the Highlanders and the French regiments brigaded with them.

The guns were palpably aware of their business. There was an air of superior condescension in their firing. It was as though they said:

"Go along, now, don't be timid. We're here to see you through."

The Highlanders had never been timid yet. They were slightly contemptuous of the guns. They spoke of them as tickling

the Germans, and they went forward in great good-humour.

At an unexpected place and in a manner quite unanticipated, the air above their heads became filled with the vicious cat-spit of driving bullets. The Scots met this sound as men meeting a familiar, if unpleasant, phenomenon. They did not greet it with levity, which is the way of young, green regiments, but, on the other hand, they were not over-impressed. They swept on unhesitatingly. Only one man in the rear file of the first company winced a little and half-ducked. No one seemed to notice this.

One hundred yards further the cat-spitting dropped lower. A few paces on, the first dull and ugly "phutt," that means wounds and death, sounded in the leading file. A big Highlander dropped his head, hung in his stride, dived headlong with a crash. The whole of the left side of his neck had become raw.

"Dum-dum!" growled the man who had companioned the dead Highlander on the left. He dissolved in oaths. He asked the presiding genius of Hades to gather to his deepest and most painful pit all Germans who fired expanding bullets.

The man who had winced at the first sound of the bullets, veered and hung back at this first casualty. He was not near the dead man at all. Nevertheless, he was unnerved at the happening. He turned green; he shied like a scared horse. His action jostled the man to his right out of his stride. It also caused him to hammer the fellow immediately behind with his rifle. Both these men cursed him savagely.

The other men in the file, however, merely sniggered. They had expected something like this from Archie Frazer. They were amused. They began to flick jokes at him. They commented upon the tint of his gills and the sag of his knees. One fellow of infinite wit asked whether Archie would feel safer if his hand were held. They viewed the whole circumstance with great good spirits. It relieved the tension they themselves felt. It helped them to prove how much more reliable they themselves were as men and soldiers.

One man, however, found nothing amusing in the actions of Archie Frazer. As Archie shied and grew green, the face of this man lowered, and his firm lips tightened. He did not break out into anger, although, being a sergeant, he had every right to be angry with anybody and everything. He stared from under his brows at the young soldier. Surprise, misery, bewilderment, resentment were mingled in that inscrutable glance.

Sergeant Hector Frazer, indeed, was endeavouring to fathom why it was that a son of his should demean himself in that fashion, why he, Hector Frazer, one of a race of brave men and fine soldiers, should have produced this pitiable thing—a coward.

When Archie had come up in the drafts to join the active service battalion of his father's regiment, and the regiment of his fathers, Hector Frazer had been more than pleased. Not only did the fact establish a unique record, but he saw it establishing yet further unique records. He perceived that the annals of the British Army would now have the opportunity of recording how father and son fought shoulder to shoulder; how they performed glorious and dazzling deeds together, even—breathless thought!—won the coveted V.C. together.

By a series of adroit manœuvrings which only an old soldier of established merit could employ, he had his son transferred to his own company. The glorious possibilities would be more assured by this action.

Now he was glad that his wire-pulling had been so successful, but for another reason. The proximity of himself to his son, which was to have been the means of helping heroic actions, would now be the means of preventing unheroic ones.

As the jeering of the Highlanders had proclaimed, this was not the first occasion on which Archie had shown the base metal of which he was made. In every engagement he had taken part in he had acted in the same way. He had not settled down. He had not acquired the assurance of a trained soldier after the first nervyness under fire inevitable to recruits. He had gone on demonstrating that he was different from other soldiers, that he was consistently a coward. And he would go on as he had begun.

Hector knew that. He had lived with soldiers for twenty-three years, he had handled them for the last ten, and he had learnt all there was to know about men and soldiers and cowards by now. His experience taught him the bitter truth that his son would never change.

His son's character, therefore, was not merely inexplicable; it was hateful. It warred against all his instincts, all his manly ideals. The boy was a coward in a line of heroes. He was, therefore, something contemptible; he was also something dangerous.

Any moment he might, by some desperate and despicable act, not only tarnish the name of his father, but the name which the regiment had venerated for courage ever since it was founded in 1796. The honour of four generations of military Frazers was in the hands of this water-hearted young man. He was capable of spoiling, by one nerveless and cowardly act, all they had built up.

The advance quickened. Right ahead of the brigade through the tangle of trees was a small walled village. The Germans were in that village, and they were busy. The whole line of the wall was jetted with rifle spurtings; the vapour of shooting rolled up and blew madly about as though the village were on fire. The guns behind were pumping shrapnel into this smoke as though theirs was the only way to smother it. The shattering flashes of the discharging shells made starlike blazes in the grey veils of picric. The white smoke of the shells looked eerie against the general dirty mistiness.

The Highlanders swung into open order, working towards the houses. They pursued the industry of advance in the methodical rushes of well-apprenticed craftsmen. They hugged cover. Every wry-necked fruit-tree became a citadel. The French advancing with them, goaded them on with cries of pride and rivalry. The Highlanders met them with like cries. Each regiment made bets on who would get in first.

The Germans were bad shots, but blind men would have been good shots at that range. Bullets pelted into the advancing brigade. The air was thick and humming with lead. Men coughed and staggered and fell. Men slumped earthwards nervelessly. The ground became thick and difficult with dead. The advance swept on. Highlanders and Frenchmen raced for the village as though its appearance had filled them with unquenchable desire.

Hector Frazer goaded his company with the inspired lash of his tongue, but all the time he seemed to give particular attention to his son. He nursed his company as well as any sergeant in the regiment, but always at those moments when Archie cast a fearful, stealthy glance behind, their eyes met—the shaky ones, the unyielding, almost fanatical ones. Each understood the glance. The son swung his head away quickly. His wild firing began again.

Hector frowned at that. The soldier in him urged him to let fly oaths to bid the boy not make a fool of himself; the father in him forbade him flurrying the boy, and so making matters worse. He was glad when the men next his son pointed out that the Germans were not in the sky yet, and that the best way to hit them now was to employ a lower trajectory.

The field-guns were doing good business. It was not all smoke above the wall now; dust in sheeted clouds went up with it. The wall began to flake, then in a minute it crumbled, and dissolved abruptly in a long sliding run of rubble. A snapping cheer went up from the Highlanders. There was an abrupt, an appalling explosion from the barricade that barred the road to the village, a great gap appeared, jagged, astonishing, in the fabric. The whole brigade cheered, and at once the Highlanders had stopped firing and were running forward. The French raced with them.

Hector got his company off at the jump. He had managed it consummately; Archie had not known what had happened. Hector had bawled the order behind him; trained instincts had responded involuntarily, and he had leapt with the rest. The rifle firing in the village became a frantic scream. Men went over here, there, everywhere in sickening and staggering falls. The advance had taken the bit in its teeth, however; it swept on.

Hector was not near Archie now, but could see him. He swore a little, but not much. He could see that his son was all for holding back, was wilting like a girl, but the press of men carried him on. Before the boy could do anything hideous, the Highlanders were in the village and clearing it out. It was a desperate, bitter little charge—an ugly snickering and thrusting of bayonets, a worrying, a little screaming. It was soon over.

The brigade pulled itself together, formed up quickly, and quickly went on. Things had to be done hot-footed now. There was a smattering of resistance still among the fruit trees of the valley, but the brigade brushed this aside, whisked it out, and flung on. At the foot of an easy hill they formed their junction with the second brigade, but stayed only long enough to form and wheel to the right. Then they went on—and up. This was the real business, flanking the Germans on the greater hill

The slopes of the rise were meshed with gardens and trees, and under these trees the Germans clustered tenaciously. The slope was alive with the fire-fly effect of snapping Mausers. The leaves threshed and fluttered under the gust of bullets.

The Highlanders went up the slope. They felt that the pride of this battle was theirs, and they went up daringly. The files spread out like ripples on water, and ascended spreading. Sections went up in rushes, and sections followed in rushes at their heels.

The hillside was full of the crackling of rifles, the yelling of the Germans, of men screaming in agony. All swirled kaleidoscopic, chaotic between and beneath the trees. It might have been a vision of an upland hell by a latter-day Dante.

As the files fanned out, as he became an isolated, unsupported unit, Archie Frazer flinched again. He took one or two hasty, hesitant steps, he looked wildly right and left. An abrupt burst of yelling and shouting boiled up on the hill before him. The leaves about his head pattered as bullets swished by. The bark of a tree "phutted," and a long white gash magically started on to its surface. Archie's right elbow went up fearfully crooking over his face. He cringed and swung about.

His father was behind him.

"Get on," snapped Hector.

Archie half choked. His face was livid.

"Dad—" he gulped. "Dad——"

"Get on," said his father, with a low and intense fury.

Archie got on. He had flashed one scared, helpless look into the fierce and relentless eyes of the man behind him. He had seen something there to make him shiver. The eyes bit into him as a whip-lash might bite. He ran on to escape them.

Hector ran on after him. He did not neglect his company; he gave it an automatic attention, but in some way he gave, in spite of his duties, a peculiar personal attention to Archie. He had come to regard Archie, not as his son, but as a menaceful thing that might at any moment bring disaster and dishonour to himself and to the name he bore. He was repeating over and over again to himself:

"I've got to look after him. I've got to see that he doesn't disgrace us. He'll turn tail and run in a minute, and we'll be disgraced—unless I stop him. I've got to stop him."

The two brigades broke from the trees, and hung looking up at the grim entrenchments they were to win. The Germans in the trenches got on to their hind legs and began to loose hell.

The whole line of *sangars* swarmed and thickened with an ever-increasing flock of Germans. The screaming note of rifle fire went up, up. The enemy's front grew frenzied with vicious activity; gun after gun was brought from the front to this flank. As these were swung into place, they shattered off in abrupt haste. A gale of shell beat down on to the two flanking brigades.

The flanking brigades hung for one perilous instant. There was a feverish sense of bewilderment. In a flash bugles were flaming up all along the lines. The bunch of the halt bunched tighter. It lunged forward. In a moment the racing companies were going across the open ground for the German lines.

The fire of these lines shrilled to a maniac scream of rage. The air became alive and pulsing with bullets. The advance swept on. The long, eager lines of the Highlanders plunged forward like a cloud of runners eager for a goal. The French cheered them on frantically, vied with them in effort.

Archie and Hector Frazer were in the front of the advance. The surging onsweep had for the moment carried the boy irresistibly forward; it had given him no chance to wince. He ran with the crowd; he also ran dazed and uncomprehendingly.

The sudden rush, the awful clamour and rage of battle had bemused him. Also the Highlander immediately in front of him was no gentleman with his rifle. Archie had to be nimble to evade its idiotic backward plungings, and what thought he had was mesmerised by that jerking brass shod butt. It would not be a tender thing to have in his stomach.

His father ran near him, still watching with glowing eyes, but the sombre fire in them had burnt up with a fiercer light. The spirit that was of all the Frazers, that had made them the soldiers and heroes they were, had leapt to life within him. He had become fanatic. He ran on shouting exultantly, spurring his men to fiercer effort.

Partly, his son was the cause of his state. He had watched the boy closely, had seen him start to run without flinching, had seen him run on without flinching. He had abruptly told himself he had been wrong. Archie was not a coward, not a weakling, a poltroon. Archie was a Frazer, and was proving himself with the best of them. He shouted, but this time he shouted to Archie. He encouraged him, he urged and spurred him on with brave cries. Together they would do tremendous, epic deeds.

Archie did not hear him, did not heed anything. The brass-shod butt still mesmerised him. He did not know that he and his fellows had outstripped the advance.

Archie hung back. "Dad," he screamed. "Dad——" Hector's bayonet took him in the fleshy part of the side. "On!" he yelled. "On, you cur! The Frazers! The Frazers!" [illegible]

The rush went into and fluttered through a cluster of scrub. This scrub was a range-mark; bullets streamed into it like pelting rain. Case-shrapnel and common-shell made it horrible. The air was ringing with crashes here.

The clumsy fool in front of him suddenly screeched. His hands went up as though to save his face, his head went back; his feet remaining fixed, his body became curved like a monstrous bow. His head jerked forward again, and he pitched on to his shoulder like a bad diver.

The Highlanders burst through the scrub almost at once. At once Archie found himself on a small plain before the trenches—and he was lonely.

Before him, not one hundred yards away, were the trenches. They loomed above him tremendously; they were overbearing, monstrous. Along the top of them flared a continuous flame of orange light. Crashes and uproar appalling environed them. Rifle smoke jetted and boiled like the very discharge of hell.

Through the smoke he saw the battle-mad faces of the Germans, saw the animal intoxication of fighting in them. And all seemed to be concentrating on *him*. He was the object of all this raving hate.

He ran a few strides mechanically; then fear, nauseating fear, crept upon him, weakening his ankles, weakening his knees, weakening his stomach. He faltered. The few men with him, Highlanders and Frenchmen, passed him yelling, dashing headlong. He half turned. His father was beside him.

"On!" he was yelling. "On, Archie! For the Frazers, the Frazers, on——"

Archie started sideways. He must evade his father. His father was mad.

"On!" snarled Hector. "On, curse you, on!"

"Dad," gasped Archie. "Dad, I——"

"You cur!" yelled Hector. His arm went back; the bayonet at the end of his rifle glittered awfully. "You cur, on, or by——"

"Dad——"

The bayonet swung. Archie jumped. He was running on again. Frantic terror urged him.

His father was behind. He could not shake off his father. And as he ran the older man goaded him, spurred him.

"On, on!" he yelled. "Faster, faster, you cur. Remember your name. Remember what Frazers have done. You mean dog, would you dirty their name? On, on, you mean rat!"

They passed the racing Frenchmen, outstripped the first of the speeding Highlanders.

They were on the trenches. A wild, a cyclonic raving of shooting belched out at them. All the *sangars* swarmed with wild-looking men, frantically anxious to slay. Their bayonets were in the air, and the sun glinted on them evilly. A rage of hate sound assaulted them.

Archie hung back.

"Dad," he screamed. "Dad——"

Hector's bayonet took him in the fleshy part of the side

"On!" he yelled. "On, you cur! The Frazers! The Frazers!"

Archie leapt convulsively, frantically, to the *sangar*. His rifle clattered from his nerveless, terror-stricken hand. A German officer sprang at him. Archie saw the man's sword swing before his eyes. He turned, and fled, stumbling down the trench, his hands covering his eyes.

"I can't," he yelled. "I'm afraid. I'm——"

Hector Frazer raised his rifle and shot his son dead.

"Frazers," he screamed. "The Frazers!"

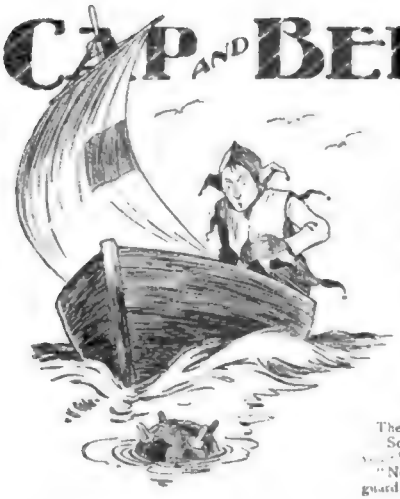
He was over the trench amongst the Germans, fighting like a madman.

LUGGAGE SIMPLIFIED.

Two cotton frocks, and a sunbonnet pink,
Shoes and some stockings, and—that's all, I think.
Clothes are a bother, they say, when one goes
To work in the hayfields; and yet, I suppose,
I may as well pack some cold cream for my nose!

D. R.

CAP AND BELLS



THE ESSENTIAL POINT.

The professional point of view is rarely that of the humanitarian. A passenger on a London omnibus called out to the conductor

"'Ere, there! Whoa! There's an old chap fallen off the 'bus!"

"All right," responded the conductor cheerfully. "'E's paid his fare!"

* * * *

GRACE OR MARJORIE?

A college student was hauled before the dean for exceeding his leave.

"Well?" said the professor.

"I'm awfully sorry," said the undergraduate. "I really couldn't get back before. I was detained by important business."

The dean looked at him sternly.

"So you wanted two more days of grace, did you?" he asked.

"No, sir," answered the young man, off his guard for the moment, "of Marjorie."

REFLECTED GLORY.

FATHER (on leave from the front): "I think we'd better be going home now, Betty."

BETTY (with an eye to admiring children on the promenade): "Oh, no, dad—not yet. There are a lot more people I want to show you to."

* * * *

ELOPING UP-TO-DATE.

The coatless man puts a careless arm
Round the waist of the hatless girl,
While over the dustless, mudless road,
In a horseless wagon they whirl;
Like a leadless bullet from a hammerless gun,
By smokeless powder driven,
They fly to taste the speechless joys
Of endless union given.

The only luncheon his coinless purse
Affords to them the means,
Is a tasteless meal of boneless cod
With a dish of stringless beans.
He smokes his old, tobaccoless pipe,
And laughs a mirthless laugh,
When Daddy tries to coax her back
By wireless telegraph.

Nana R. Elder.

* * * *

A CHANCE TO RISE.

"If you don't mind, sir," said the new convict, "I should like to be put at my own trade."

"That might be a good idea," said the governor. "What is your trade?"

"I'm an aviator."

When Great-aunt Lucy was a girl she wore a crinoline,
A bonnet with a charming ruche to suit her sober mien.
She never had to board a 'bus or scramble on a tram,
Nor had a toy pom for a pet, but chose, instead, a lamb.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF FIDO.

The hot weather making Fido thirsty, he explores the milk jug—

—and inadvertently takes a header into it, much to the alarm of little Ellen—

—whose efforts to remove the jug from his head—

—only result in stretching his neck till he looks more like a grotesque china animal than a self-respecting dog.

A FAIR SAMPLE.

The surgeon had at last arrived at Pat's bedside, and after the usual preliminaries he prodded poor Pat in the region of his wound. "Does that hurt you?" he asked.

Pat leant forward a moment in his cot, and landing the surgeon a stunning blow on the nose, he shouted: "Shure, an' do thot hurt you?"

• •

MERELY BONES.

Two years ago two little fellows of seven and eight years old heard older people speaking of skeletons. The seven-year old boy listened intently to the conversation, when the older boy, with an air of superior knowledge, said abruptly:

"You don't know what a skeleton is, and I do."

"So do I!" replied the younger. "I do know. I know for certain I do."

"Well, what is it?"

"It's bones with the people off!"

• •

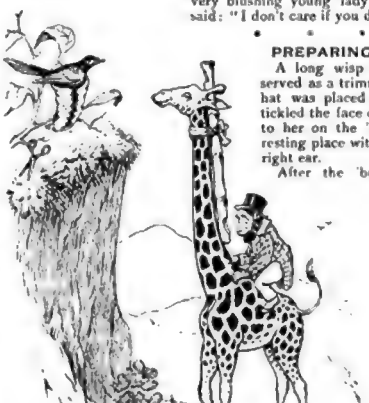
A COMBINATION.

"What do you want?" demanded Mr. Newlywed, as he confronted the tramp at the door of his little week-end cottage down in the country. "Breakfast or work?"

"Both, sir," replied the tramp.

"H'm," said Mr. Newlywed, and disappeared momentarily into the house. Presently he returned carrying a piece of his wife's home-made bread.

"Then eat that," he said savagely, "and you'll have both."



CHIMPANZEE: "What a blessing these periscopes are! I've just seen my tailor bird in time to miss him."

TAKING NO RISKS.

TRAVELLER: "Waiter, get me a lamb chop, quickly. My train goes in eighteen minutes."

WAITER: "Yes, sir, one and sixpence."

TRAVELLER: "What! Do you expect me to pay in advance?"

WAITER: "If you please, sir. You may be gone before it's ready."

• •

A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

A railway guard was walking along the line beside his train, which had stopped at a country station, calling out the name of the place: "Sawyer, Sawyer."

Suddenly the window of a compartment, from which came the sound of kissing, went down, and a very blushing young lady put her head out and said: "I don't care if you did. We're married!"

• • • • •

PREPARING FOR HARVEST.

A long wisp of artificial wheat that served as a trimming on the sweet girl's hat was placed horizontally so that it tickled the face of the man who sat next to her on the 'bus, until it came to a resting place with the end nestling in his right ear.

After the 'bus had travelled some distance the man was seen to remove from his pocket a large jack-knife, which he proceeded to strop on the palm of a horny hand.

Excitedly the girl inquired:

"Why are you doing that?"

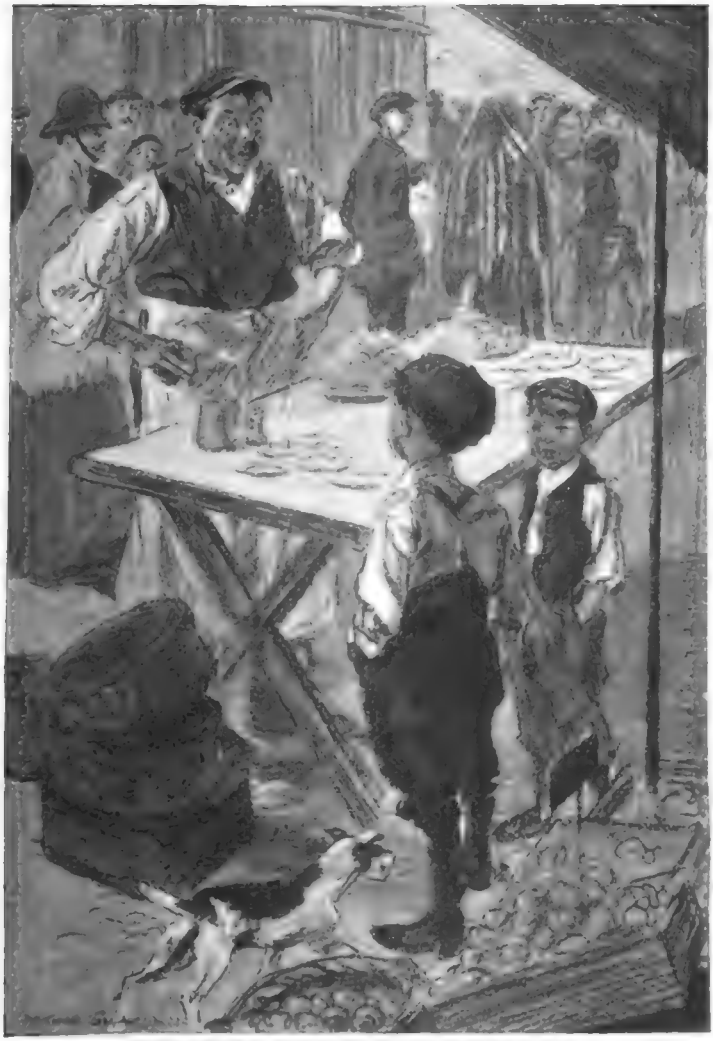
"Ii them oats gits in my ear agin," the man ejaculated, "there's goin to be a harvest."

• •

UP-TO-DATE.

KIND STRANGER. "How old is your baby brother, little girl?"

LITTLE GIRL: "He's this year's model."



STALLKEEPER: "An' 'ow would yer like yrr winkles, Tommy?"
TOMMY: "Filleted, please. Me an' my mate feels a bit dainty terday."

ASSAULT OR AFFECTION?

1. Smith is one of those exuberant souls who greet their friends with a thud on the back disastrous to hat and umbrella alike.

A WELCOME CHEQUE.

When the young officer, ordered to the front, called on his tailor to order a fresh outfit, the tailor could not forget that there was already an old and unsettled account. But he felt nervous about broaching the subject.

"I see the Germans," said the young officer casually, "have had a check."

"Lucky Germans!" said the tailor wistfully.

The young man looked puzzled for a moment, and then took the gentle hint. Next day the bill was settled.

* * *

IT COULD WAIT.

YOUNG LADY: "How is it you don't come to Sunday-School, Katie?"

KATIE: "Oh, please, miss, I'm learning French and music now, and mother doesn't wish me to take up religion till later."

* * * * * *

PERSONAL SERVICE.

VISITOR: "Pat, there's a hole in the roof of the church, and I am trying to collect money sufficient to repair it. Come, now, what will you contribute?"

PAT: "Me services, sor."

VISITOR: "What do you mean, Pat? You are no carpenter."

PAT: "No; but if it rains next Sunday Oi'll sit over the hole."

* * * * * *

LOCATING THE SPOT.

Little Kitty had fallen down and cut her knee. Her mother promptly rendered first aid, but as it was rather dark, and she could not see the wound properly, she consequently placed the bandage rather too low.

"Oh, mummie,' complained the child, "this bandage is not in the right place. I fell down higher up."

A HARD-HEADED YOUTH.

A lanky youth who occupied a seat in a train persisted in sticking his head and shoulders out of the window. Another passenger touched him on the back.

"Better keep your head inside the window," he advised.

"I can look out of the window if I want to," answered the youth.

"I know you can," warned the passenger. "But if you damage any of the ironwork on the bridges you'll have to pay for it."

* * * * *

NOT TO BE PUT UPON.

"I tell you I won't have this room,' protested the old lady to the boy in buttons who was conducting her. "I ain't goin' to pay my money for a cupboard with a measly little foldin' bed in it. If you think that just because I'm from the country——'

Profoundly disgusted, the boy cut her short. "Get in, madam, get in," he ordered. "This ain't yer room. This is the lift."

* * * * *

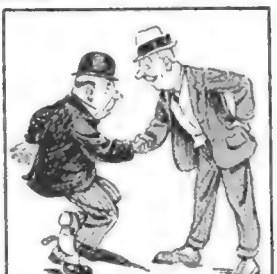
THE ONLY CONCLUSION.

The minister, who was dining with some friends, was denouncing the new styles of dancing. Turning to the daughter of the house, he asked sternly:

"Do you yourself, Miss Nancy, think the girls who dance these dances are right?"

"They must be," was the answer, "because I notice the girls who don't dance them are left."

* * *



2. Brown, unable to avoid him, endures his painful handshake with the air of a martyr.

LESS DANGEROUS.

LADY (with the newspaper at the breakfast-table, much moved by patriotic leader): "I feel, John, that I must do something. Shall I take up nursing or rifle-shooting?"

JOHN (faintly): "Might I suggest rifle-shooting, dear, as likely to cause less damage?"

3. "You're looking well." The hand-shake is followed by a grip on his shoulder that brings Brown to the verge of apoplexy.

A STANDING INVITATION.

SUSPICIOUS POLICEMAN (to tramp): "I want your name and address."

TRAMP (sarcastically): "Oh, yer do, do yer? Well, me name is Tom Brown, and me address is No. 1, The Open Air. If yer call on me don't trouble to knock, but jist walk in."

* * * * * *

A TWO YEARS' HANDICAP.

"Why do you insist on having the biggest share of the pudding, Harry?" asked the mother of a small boy. "Isn't your older brother entitled to it?"

"No, he isn't," replied the little fellow. "He was eating pudding two years before I was born."

* * * * * *

USING FORCE.

Jobling was a meek, nervous-looking little man, and when he had to give evidence against a ruffian who had attempted to rob his house, the prisoner's counsel, a big, blustering bully, thought he could easily discredit him. Having described the events that led up to the burglar's capture, Jobling said:

"Of course I got him all right, but I had to use considerable force before he gave in."

"Indeed?" replied the lawyer with a sceptical smile, as he looked the little man up and down. "And what force was it you used?"

"Oh!" explained Jobling with a bland smile, "it was the police force."

* * *

A GOODLY COMPANY.

The company promoter, who had served in the Boer war, was relating some of his alleged experiences.

"The shell came sailing through the air. Bang! It burst. Death stared me in the face. I thought of all I had ever done."

"You must have thought of a regular directory of shareholders," interrupted a listener.

6. After this he departs, leaving Brown to wonder whether he has been the victim of an assault or an overwhelming display of affection.

5. —and following up by a vigorous thump on his chest, which results in Brown's collar bursting asunder.

A GENUINE CREEPER.

A motor-car manufacturer had adopted the plan of naming his cars after flowers.

"I think of calling my new car the Crimson Rambler," he told a friend.

The friend, who had been out in the new car, replied unkindly:

"Why not call it the Virginia Creeper?"

* * *

QUITE A-MUSING

The gentleman with long hair and a soft hat was negotiating with the lady who let apartments.

"Might I ask you, sir," she said, "what is your occupation?"

"Well," he said, "it would be rather difficult to define, but I may say that I am a lover of the muse."

"That's funny," said the landlady. "My last lodger was connected with the stables, too!"

4. "Why, I declare, you're getting quite stout," remarks Smith jovially, prodding his friend with a genial forefinger—

* * * * * *

AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE!

Two boys who managed to be rather unruly in school so exasperated their teacher that she ordered them to remain after hours and write their names five hundred times. They plunged into the task. Some fifteen minutes later one of them grew uneasy and began watching his companion in disgrace. Suddenly the first one burst out into sobs, and said to the teacher:

"'Tain't fair, mum! His name's Bush and mine's Macgillavry."

* * * * * *

THE LIE OF THE LAND.

Some probable investors were being shown over a building estate in the country.

"Come this way, gentlemen," the agent said. "On the rising ground you can see how the land lies."

"Or the land agent," quietly remarked one of the party.

HOW TALL TALES ARISE:

I.

A sudden fright neath tropic skies.
(What monster meets the traveller's eyes?)

GRATEFUL.

BORELEIGH: "Some men, you know, are born great, some achieve greatness."

MISS KEEN: "Exactly! And some just grate upon you."

* * * * *

A FISHY AFFAIR.

"There's a man at the door with a parcel for you, ma'am."

"What is it, Bridget?"

"It's a fish, ma'am, and it's marked C.O.D."

"Then make the man take it straight back to the shop. I ordered trout."

* * *

A COVETED TASK.

Several members of a women's club were chatting with a little daughter of their hostess.

"I suppose you are a great help to your mamma?" said one.

"Oh, yes," replied the little girl, "and so is Ethel; but it is my turn to count the spoons to-day after the company is gone."

* * * * *

IT LOOKED SUSPICIOUS.

GENTLEMAN (in railway train): "How did this accident happen?"

GUARD: "Someone pulled the cord and stopped the train, and the boat express ran into us. It will take five hours to clear the line for us to go ahead."

GENTLEMAN: "Five hours! Great Scott! I was to be married to-day."

GUARD (a married man, sternly): "Look here, are you the chap who stopped the train?"

* * * * *

NO CLUE AT ALL.

DRIVER OF PAIR (to quiet stranger on suburban road): "Hi! mister, just hold that there horse's head for a minute while I get down, will yer?"

STRANGER (nervously): "Wh-wh-which one?"

DRIVER: "Why, the off 'un, to be sure."

STRANGER: "My good man, I am totally unacquainted with horses, and it is quite impossible for me to tell which of your animals is an orphan."

II.

A terrorised and hurried flight
Leaves unexplained the fearsome sight.

THE BACK OF A BIKE.

If you're feeling "fed up" and in need of a thrill,
There's a topping sensation you're certain to like:
Let your latest young man take you out, if he can,
On the back of his new motor-bike.
It is perfectly safe, there's no chance of a spill,
There is nothing on earth to alarm you, but still
You'll be planning your will as you rush down the hill
When you ride on the back of a bike!

It's not very easy to do it with grace,
And people regard you with fear and dislike—
But a motor's no go and a side-car's too "slow,"
So nothing remains but the bike.
The corners are really far worse than the pace,
And you clutch your companion with frenzied embrace,
While an anxious expression is fixed on your face
(Just in case) as you race well—all over the place,
When you ride on the back of a bike.

Valentine Fane.

* * * *

A WELL-STOCKED LINE.

A certain poor woman had received some new underclothes from one who had helped the family. The woman's husband thanked the donor's husband, and a whole drama of humble ambitions might be built round his words.

"Mary's terrible glad to have those clothes," he said. "She says now she'll have something to hang out on the line on Mondays."

* * *

NO OPTION.

Ethel used to play a good deal in Sunday-School, but one day she had been so good that the teacher said encouragingly:

"Ethel, my dear, you have been a very good girl to-day."

"Yeth'm," responded Ethel. "I couldn't help it. I dot a stiff neck."

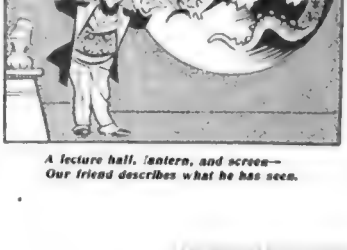
* * * * *

MOST LIKELY.

BIX: "By the-way, who is, or rather was, the god of war?"

DIX: "I've forgotten the duffer's name, but I think it was Ananias."

III.



A lecture hall, lantern, and screen—
Our friend describes what he has seen.

The Rout of Religion.

By
HAROLD BEGBIE

Mr. Harold Begbie is known to a wide public as the author of many books, poems, and newspaper articles, and his famous recruiting poem, "Fall In!" sounded a trumpet note throughout the country at the beginning of the war. In the following article Mr. Begbie points out the impotence of religion in the present war, and prophesies a wider brotherhood and a more practical Christianity after hostilities have ceased.

Photo. L. Normand, Ipswich.

Mr. Harold Begbie, whose views on the question of religion and the war form the subject of an arresting article.

MEN are saying: "The war will change everything; life will never be the same again." But the phrase is too strong. One thing will remain unchanged and unshaken, and it is that very thing which is foundational to all other things, namely, human nature. Life has survived, before this, enormous catastrophic events, human nature emerging from the maelstrom with only such trivial modifications as, catching their eye, encourage the tinkerers of thought to consider themselves profound psychologists. Of human nature we might almost say: "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end." Human nature is as incorrigible as the east wind.

The Scars of Conflict.

But, though life will be much the same after this war, and though nothing will be really changed—*change* being a word of tremendous meaning—it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that a great many things will be affected by this war, and after this war will bear the marks and the scars of its ferocious chastisement for many years, perhaps for centuries.

Religion is certainly one of those things.

If we are quite honest with ourselves we shall not be content with the statement that the war is a struggle between German Militarism and Democratic Freedom. It is in truth, if we go deep enough, a terrific conflict between German and British commerce. German Militarism is the sledge-hammer of the German bagman. The German people are not fighting to rule the world, but to capture markets; ruling the world is only the natural and relatively unimportant consequence of the bagman's victory. They want trade, they want the world's trade, and they have made themselves a nation of soldiers, not because they love war, but because they are set upon commercial supremacy.*

Religion as Looker-on.

Now Religion is only impotent in this crisis

* Every publicist in Germany supports the contention of German statesmen that this war is caused by jealousy of Germany's commercial greatness. And the German democracy is convinced of it.

because it has been impotent all along in that which has led up to this crisis. Religion is impotent in war because it has been impotent in trade. Religion could not prevent the war because it had not previously prevented commercial competition; it cannot stop the war because it has never attempted to stop trade wars, or sweating, or price-cutting, or trusts, or commercial selfishness. Religion has been a looker-on. It has played no active part in existence. It has occupied the seat of a spectator, or has been the considerate physician to those whom the battles of trade fling broken and almost dead out of the firing line. Religion has never stood up to industrialism, and called it a devil. The tables of the money-changers are fastened to the ground; those who sell doves fear violence only from the Suffragettes; from the Church they expect protection.

I venture to think, if one may presume to speak of so high a matter, that God does not disapprove of this hideous and bloody strife of the nations any more severely than He must have reprobated, for many cruel and disastrous years, that pitiless, violent, and disgusting selfishness which has organised itself into an industrial system, and has made of human life, with all its beauty and all its solemnity, this ugly, misshapen, raucous, and soul-crushing ogre who sprawls over the earth grabbing gold with his blood-dripping hands, and crushing the bodies of men, women, and children into the vile mud churned up by his own cloven feet.

The Maimings of Commerce.

Go slowly through the streets of any great centre of industry, studying the faces of humanity and listening to the words that come bitterly from their lips, and ask yourself whether the wounds inflicted by gun, rifle, and steel, are not cleaner wounds than the maimings of commerce. And consider how the civil hospitals of the world are filled with tortured humanity, and consider the vast armies of the world's women pressed into the most revolting business of earning money because of commercial competition. And look at the packed public-houses, the atrocious architecture, the dreadful clothes, the vulgarising theatres, the hypocritical journalism, and the nauseous literature of these great centres of commerce. Who would live there, except to make money?

Why has Religion looked on and kept silence? Life's object is not the making of money.

Competition the Keynote of Existence.

Here and there men have spoken bravely, men like Charles Kingsley and F. D. Maurice, but we may compare their voices to the superb heroism of Army chaplains in the firing line. The Church as a body has made no more difference to the War of Trade than it has made to the War of Nations. The Trade War has gone on unchallenged and unquestioned. It seems as if it is part of the natural order. Socialists arise to claim the profits for everybody; politicians adjust here and interfere there, but the thing goes on. Competition has become the soul of our existence. The race of life is the race to get rich.

A Church Divided Against Itself.

Is it so amazing, then, that we find in this war a man like Bishop Gore upholding British arms, a man like Eucken upholding German arms, a man like the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris upholding French arms, and the priests of Bavaria to a man upholding German arms? Catholics are slaughtering Catholics; Protestants are slaughtering Protestants. The French soldier and the German soldier expire kissing the same Cross and breathing the same prayer. On both sides men are singing hymns, reading the Bible, praying through Christ to the One True God. And the bugles of nationalism blow, the Bible is put away, the hymns and prayers cease, murder shines in the eyes, and this side advances with poisoned gas in their hands, that side with bomb and bayonet, and the ground is strewn with writhing bodies of brother Christians.

Is it madness that such a thing should come to pass? But if you reflect that in every nation the Church is associated with its commercial life, you will see that such awful confusion is inevitable. The Church in France is fighting for French trade, the Church in Germany is fighting for German trade, the Church in England is fighting for English trade. Which do you suppose the priests of Italy would rather die for, the Italian nation or the Catholic Church?

America's Attitude.

America looks on. All the human sympathies of that vast continent are on the side of the Allies. Ninety men in every hundred will tell you that they desire to see Germany beaten and the Allies victorious. But, as a nation, America is silent. Belgium was overrun, atrocities were committed which are

too horrible for thought, international law was contemptuously broken and derided, everything was done by Germany which would have made the soul of Abraham Lincoln flame up with righteous indignation, but America is silent, and America is silent because she has her trade for her supreme consideration. She will not go to war unless her own life is in danger, or thought to be seriously menaced.

Do not let us misjudge America. The British Foreign Office put no pressure on America, the British Government made no overtures to the American Government; no serious politician in England ever wanted America to join the Allies, and for a good reason. But America might have spoken spontaneously, might have checked Germany at the onset by one vigorous and tremendous word, might have been, indeed, the Voice of God. She did not speak; she kept a discreet silence; she had her own people to think about—that is to say, her first duty was to American trade.

Trade is the cause of the war, and trade is the enemy we shall all have to fight after the war.

Renewal of Religious Interest.

It is fairly certain, I think, that men will feel a more intelligent curiosity about Religion when this armed struggle is brought to a conclusion. Certainly throughout Europe thousands of people who never gave the other world a serious thought will want to believe in a life after death. No doubt a great number of sects will be born. Death has been so busy, hearts are so broken, homes are so desolate: it will be the opportunity of the crank and the faddist. But people who count, deep-thinking and sure-minded people, will inquire steadily about Religion and come to some more or less definite conclusion.

I have the feeling that one result of this war, and perhaps the supreme result, will be a new reverence in the minds of men for Truth. It will not suffice for them to be told that such-and-such is the tradition of the Church, or that such-and-such is the interpretation of the Higher Criticism. They will say to themselves:

"Religion did not avert this horrible war; Religion was powerless even to mitigate the waste and destruction of this hideous catastrophe: Religion has really done nothing at all for the brotherhood of humanity."

They will reflect that Religion has had a long innings, that Religion has enjoyed enormous wealth and influence, that Religion has had the means and the inspiration to make a brotherhood of the human race. Is it not certain that they will reject the existing organisation of Religion which has so disastrously failed humanity?

A Fresh Appeal to Mankind.

This means, I think, that Religion will seek a fresh appeal to mankind. Instead of contenting itself with attempts to fill local churches, to raise money, and to curry favour with the rich, it will endeavour to win the whole world to the real faith of the real Christ.

And in that endeavour I think it is possible that the Church may be born again. That is to say, men who feel the attraction of Christ and whose souls are compelled by Christ, seeing the desertion of the multitude and recognising the supreme virtue of Truth, will revolutionise the Church, as we now know it, simply by the earnestness of their own lives and the tremendous heroism which will be demanded of them by the real call of the real Christ. They will compose a new Church.

The present generation of Christians will pass away sorrowful and dejected. But another generation will be born for whom none of our conventions, traditions, and political ideas will have the smallest importance in comparison with the awful calamity of a world abandoned to materialism. These men will live lives as devoted as St. Vincent's or St. Francis' or William Booth's, but lives as passionate for justice as the lives of Voltaire and Shelley, as eager for beauty as the lives of William Morris and Ruskin.

The Death Knell of Commercialism.

They will see that war does not kill Religion, but the accepted conditions which cause war. That is to say, they will see that Religion has never been tried in the affairs of men. Trade will stand out with a tremendous emphasis. Trade will be seen as despot and slave-driver. They will throw themselves with energy against the arch-enemy of God and man, seeing with clear vision and a fiery indignation that human life has been mauled and disfigured by a soulless, brutalising, and purely animal commercialism—the master Anti-Christ.

They will be socialists, but not the political socialists of the present day. They will be socialists who claim that life is an effort of the spirit to master and control matter,

that "the spiritualisation of matter" is the secret of evolution, and that nothing must exist in the social order which tends to "the mechanisation of spirit." The Church of that day will admit no one to the Christian brotherhood who exploits his fellow-creatures, or who does not live his life by the golden rule of Religion. There will be a clean dividing line at last. There will be at last a veritable Catholic Church, however small and however persecuted. And men will be able to see, as no man at the present time can see, the immense difference between a Christian and a non-Christian.

The Church's Ignominious Silence.

I heard a well-known man say at a luncheon party the other day that what most impressed him in this war was the collapse of ecclesiasticism. He spoke of the Church's ignominious silence in this world crisis. No one contradicted him.

One of the chief manufacturers of the Midlands, a man of ideals, remarked to me recently that industrialism had destroyed the imaginative faculties of the human race.

"No one nowadays," he said, "makes anything with the object of beautifying life or improving cities; all the inventive genius of the manufacturer is directed to the making of things which will return him the largest profit. Everybody is trying to be rich, not to be good, not to be happy, not to make other people rich. And this is why our cities are so ugly, the people so dull and stupid, and life so charged with dissatisfaction and unrest."

The Dawn of a New Civilisation.

If the war brings home to the minds of men that the cause of all its carnage and loss was the same cause which renders life coarse, harsh, unamiable, and savage; and if the Church is born again in this awakening of the religious conscience; and if, henceforth, the main enemy of the human race is seen to be individual selfishness, and to live for others becomes first the passion and then the habit of mankind—may we not say that the soldiers who have fallen in the war are the first martyrs of a new civilisation and that their blood is destined to be the seed of a true Church?

Human nature will remain, but—if Truth prevail—with a new direction. We shall still have to fight an inward battle, but the social order will encourage, not mock, that sublime and significant struggle of the soul. Humanity will consciously organise itself for Perfection.

A SOLDIER TO HIS LOVE.

Ah! how can I express what joy was mine
When first I felt that warm embrace of thine!
The rapturous thrill which ran from head to heel—
That thrill which only devotees may feel.
All through the desert of the days gone by
I thirsted for thee; saw with longing eye
A vision fair, where cleansing waters run—
'Twas but a mirage, water was there none.
But when I met thee, straightway fell away
The low, degrading soil of every day;
I was renewed; gone were the thoughts that pained,
The primal state of purity regained.

But parting from thee proved an awful wrench—
My first hot bath since I have left the trench!

Judah Carrington.

Love Letters of an Actress

by

Elsie Janis

These letters are not in the least statistical, but merely the legitimate offspring of imagination and observation. The first six characters are typically American, while those that follow them reflect the attitude of the modern Englishman to the stage. Personally, the only man that ever told me he could not live without me was divorced by the lady he married two months afterwards, on the ground of cruelty. However, this is my idea of how a popular actress should be loved.—ELSIE JANIS.

I.—THE BOY.

His First Letter.

Yale College,
64 York Street.

DEAR MISS MARSDEN,

I know you have hundreds of these requests a day, but please do not tear this effusion up without giving it a chance. When I say it, I mean "me." I want your picture, with your name on it. (That sounds like I had a gun to back the demand up with, but in this case I have only that feeble thing called a heart.) At this moment I want your picture much more than I do the diploma which my dad fondly believes I will receive two years from now. I will say no more. But if it is any satisfaction to a wonderful person like you are, it is the first picture I ever wanted, let alone asked for.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN J. WILKINS, JR.

P.S.—Am coming to town for Easter; shall see you every night from the front. If you decide to grant my request, address 52 East 78th Street, Town.

J. J. W.

Her Answer.

17 East 57th Street.

DEAR MR. WILKINS,

You have used a far more deadly weapon than a gun, and to such an extent that I am taking pleasure in answering your note myself. I send the best picture I have. It is my favourite. Now, your father cannot blame me if you do not get that diploma. If you would like it, you might come in to tea Friday of this week. I am not usually so informal, but you sound sincere, and where there is sincerity, there is no need for formality.

Cordially,

MARY MARSDEN.

His Letter.

Two weeks later.

Monday.

DEAREST OF ALL,

Oh, how can I drag through these miserable days and nights? Since being in your presence Saturday, I have been as one in a dream—just existing on the memory of your sweetness. I know you will say I am young, and laugh with that wonderful, discouraging, and yet encouraging laugh of yours and tell me to be sensible, but it is

too late for that. Listen, Mary—oh, that wonderful name! I breathe it as I would a prayer. Darling, won't you leave all that light and falseness? You don't belong in it; won't you marry me and come away with me? I know I am young, but I will make you happy. Mary, be kind, for I cannot live without you.

Your,

JACK.

Her Answer.

Wednesday.

DEAR FOOLISH BOY,

I am going to be kind to you by being a bit brutal. First of all, I do not love you, and that's an item in itself. You are very good-looking, and therefore I enjoyed looking at you and finding out what you were like. You are nineteen; I am twenty-four. You will have millions if you marry some nice girl that your father approves of, and you will bring her to see me act, and she will say: "I wonder what she is like off the stage?" Then you will be so ashamed of having written me as you have, that you will hesitate and then say: "I wonder; actresses are all sort of queer." Good-bye, dear boy; think of me as part of your college education.

MARY MARSDEN.

P.S.—Please do not try to see me again.

He Writes Again.

Friday.

DEAREST,

How could you write such a cold, heartless, commercial letter? It is not a bit like you. You don't know me. I could not love anyone as I do you. You are right; father has the girl all picked out that he wants me to marry—the daughter of his partner in business. She is pretty and I like her, but love her—never. Oh, I am so miserable I can't sleep nights, but I shall respect your wishes not to see you again, and suffer.

Thank God you did not ask me to forget you, for that is impossible. Farewell, darling.

Your,

JACK.

Clipping from New York "Town Topics."

Two months later.

I have noticed young Jack Wilkins and little Freda Milton are inseparable lately. I

predicted that match, and now as the Wilkins family and the Milton family are sailing together on the *Ruritania* to-morrow, I suppose I am, as usual, right.

Youth forgives easily, but forgets even more easily.

II.—THE LAWYER.

His First Letter.

61 Wall Street.

DEAR MISS MARSDEN,

I read in to-day's *Herald* that you are having some trouble with your contracts. I do not wish to seem impertinent in this matter, but I have read the case and am

interested. If you have no personal attorney, I should be pleased to handle this case for you. I know this is unusual but I am very much interested.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM G. WILLOUGHBY.

Her Reply.

Tuesday.

DEAR MR. WILLOUGHBY,

Your kind note received. Will you call and see me Thursday afternoon? I deeply appreciate your interest in my case.

Sincerely,

MARY MARSDEN.

Another Letter.

Three weeks later.

61 Wall Street.

DEAR LITTLE WOMAN,

Don't you be a bit worried now. I am going to win for you. I thought last night that you looked rather pale and tired. Please, dear Girl, do not worry. Depend upon me, for you know that I live to please and help you.

WILLIAM WILLOUGHBY.

Her Answer.

Wednesday.

DEAR BIG MAN,

I will not worry any more, for I have perfect confidence in your powers, and your saying that you live to please me makes me very happy. I may honestly say that if this is true, you do not live in vain.

Always your friend,

MARY MARSDEN.

Another.

Two weeks later.

61 Wall Street.

SWEETEST OF ALL LITTLE WOMEN,

When I left you last night I was very unhappy because I had not accomplished what I started out to do. I am very brave in a court-room, but very much of a coward when the jury consists of two large brown eyes that I love to death. I cannot face them, for I don't want to see them if they should frown, so I write my plea. You have shown me that you liked me by being with me, for as you often say: "Women who earn their own way don't have to be where they don't want to," but do you care for me enough to be with me always? I frankly admit that I cannot be satisfied to be your lawyer and friend. I love you too much. Think it over, dear. I love you madly—too madly to tell you so myself without raving. So that is why I write to you. This means everything to me; in fact, the thought of life without you is horrible.

Always,

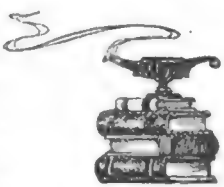
YOUR BIG MAN.

Her Answer.

17 East 57th Street.

DEAR BIG MAN,

I am so sorry it cannot be. I like you, oh, so much, too much to fool you by saying wait, and maybe I can care, for I know that I could never care in the way I want to when I take the marriage vow. There are three kinds of love—respectful love, companionable love, and passionate love. They marry on any one of them, but I want all three. The first I have for you; the second I am beginning to have by constant association with such a real "Big Man," but the third could never come, because its place



is first and the others follow. I won't say, "Forget me," for I should hate you to do so, but know that I shallalwaysthink of our friendship as one of the nice things in my life.

MARY.

His Farewell.

61 Wall Street.

LITTLE WOMAN,

I understand and thank you for giving me a square deal. I am not going to see you again, for it would only mean strained conversation, and I want always to think of our associations as being at least natural. I am sailing to-morrow for South America on a big railroad case. Good-bye, dearest. I love you. That's all.

WILL.

Announcement, Paris "Herald."

Six months later.

CHILI, Oct. 7.—The engagement of Señorita Dolores Valaquez, the daughter of Señor Rodriguez Valaquez, is announced. The prospective bridegroom is an American lawyer, William G. Willoughby, who came here a few months ago to settle up the affairs of the Central Railroad. Señorita Valaquez is called the "Belle of Chili," besides being an heiress in her own right.

A man, a maid, and money.
Answer—Matrimony.

III.—THE COMPOSER

The Beginning.

London, England.

MARY DEAREST,

This will introduce Mr. Robert Tourney. He is a dear, and I know you will love him. He is new in America, so treat him kindly. *A toi.*

ETHEL.

P.S.—I almost forgot to say that he is a wonderful composer, and he plays divinely.

Her Note to Him After Their First Meeting.

17 East 57th Street.

DEAR MR. TOURNEY,

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed meeting you and how your music has consumed me with admiration. I want to introduce you to some of my friends, as I know what it is to be a stranger in a strange land. Will you dine with me this Sunday at 7.30?

Cordially,

MARY MARSDEN.

His Acceptance.

Wednesday.

DEAR LADY,

There is no power that could keep me from your side but your own command. That you like my music gives me new life, and I have recompense for all my work. *Au plaisir de vous voir.*

ROBERT TOURNEY.

Six Months Later.

Monday.

MY LADY OF DREAMS, to whom I owe all the happiness I have known in life, good-bye!

My dreams are ended and my air-castles crumbling and falling about my head. Dear old mother always urged me to fall in love with a good woman, and that it would help me in every way. Well, I have done it, as you well know, and, with my usual cleverness, I have overdone it. I have fallen in love with a madonna, so far beyond my reach that the light blinds me when I look up to my desire. Mary, love of all that is good in my soul, forgive me for being a failure. I'm going back home, having failed in everything. But I have known you, have lived on your smiles and existed on the hope of seeing you again. All that is finished. Mary, listen to me; my boat sails day after to-morrow morning at ten. If you care

for me at all in the way you know I worship you, send me a line, and I will go home and work, work, work until I can come back a success. All I need is your blessing. Oh, dearest, please tell me that I did hear a tender note in your voice when you called me your Music Man.

Adieu, my darling, help me to be worthy of you if you want me.

S.S. *Lapland*. ROBERT.

Her Letter to the Ship.

MY MUSIC MAN,

You were right; you did hear tenderness in my voice when I called you My Music Man, for my heart is full of tenderness for you. I have realised what you were going through, seeing other people succeed, who don't deserve it, while you struggle on; and oh, dear Rob, I am so proud of you for breaking away like this without fuss, just

because you knew it had to come. I am very fond of you, dear, and I think the only thing that has kept me from loving you really has been your lack of success. I have worked so hard to get mine that I cannot respect those who don't try. Go home and work, dear, work, and let me hear how you get on. I shall not marry for two years at least, if that is any help and with it the blessing you ask for, only a hundred times more. *Adieu*.

MARY.

His Letter.

Two months later.

London.

MY MADONNA,

Joy fills my heart. My opera—no, our opera—is, as you know by now, an enormous success. All the papers compare it with "The Mikado," and on Monday when they called for us to make speeches, mine was, "Mary did it all. I owe it all to Mary." It seemed I just must say it to them, but I only bowed and murmured the dear old standby, "I thank you!" Now, darling, listen; in a month I am coming over to you, and oh, Mary mine, be merciful. If you do not love me, it is all for nothing, for I shall still have failed in everything that counts. I don't see how I have lived without the music of your voice, but it is in every strain of this new work of mine. Mary is the theme, the plot, and the success of it. I shall not let you know when I arrive—I will just arrive, and oh, Heaven, send me not in vain!

All my love,

ROB.

Excerpt from Mary's Diary.

Three weeks later.

Rob will be here any day now, and I am nearly crazy. I don't know what I shall do, for I know now that it is not love of him, but of his wonderful music; for as I look back on the hours we spent together I remember I would urge him to play some wonderful soul melody so that I might dream of someone else that I had never seen. It must have been my mother's instinct that made me give him hope to try and make him become great. But I have done a terrible thing, for I do not even think of seeing him with joy—only to hear his music. Oh, I am miserable!

Clipping from New York "World."

Three weeks later.

Among the hundreds of brave men who stood back to say, "Women and children first!" in the greatest of all marine disasters, was the young composer of *The Firefly*, which is now the biggest success in London—Mr. Robert Tourney. When last seen by friends he was handing a little girl into a lifeboat. Mr. Tourney was considered the coming man in musical circles, and what makes it doubly sad is the fact that he was coming to America to be married.

Truly it is said, "We must die to be really appreciated."

(More Love Letters next month)

ALL UP A TREE

"When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green——"

By Jessie Pope.

"It's a perfectly delicious tree," said Monica, her small, red head thrown back, and her amber eyes gazing rapturously at the curious oak, whose gnarled trunk ended in a fan-shaped circle of leafy, tangled boughs twenty feet from the ground. "What is it, Montague; an elm or a beech?"

"Oh, something of that sort," replied her large, complacent husband evasively. "I remember the estate agent said there was a curious bit of timber in the park-land adjoining our Grange. Fancy that Monica, *our Grange!* Bit of luck for you when you married me, what!"

"A bit of luck for you when I found the old place going for a song, and gave you no peace night and day till you signed the agreement," retorted the amber-eyed girl in the saxe-blue tub-frock. "Look here, chum, I'm going to get up that tree. I don't mind betting we could make a perfect little tree-house where the old trunk ends and the boughs begin to spread out. Fetch a ladder. There's one in *our courtyard.* Ahem!"

"And it can stop there," replied Montague. "A day's work in the City added to a two-mile walk to the station each way is quite enough honest toil for me without running about with ladders on my back when I get home."

"Right-o," said Monica, "then I'll fetch it myself."

In the end they both staggered across the field with the long ladder between them, and by dint of feminine enthusiasm, masculine brute force and much mutual contradictory advice, reared it up against the oak tree.

"It's a rotten, silly game," panted Montague, as he followed his agile better-half up into the branches, "and we shall both break our legs before we've finished."

But there *was* a kind of rugged platform at the top from which the twisted branches radiated in a circle of natural armchairs, into whose gnarled and knobby embraces Monica fitted her small person with characteristic ecstasy.

"Oh, chum!" she cried. "It's an absolute dream!"

"More like a nightmare!" growled the partner of her joys and sorrows, holding tightly to a substantial bough, and averting his eyes from the ground, twenty feet below. "Never was any good at these monkey tricks. Come on! The sooner we get down the better. Makes me dizzy."

"Oh, you'll be all right when it's dark, dearest. We'll bring rugs and cushions, and turn the place into a delicious nest, and spend long, luxurious nights under the stars."

"I *don't* think," he replied. "No birds' nests for me, or you either. Be as unconventional as you like before marriage, but no sky-larking afterwards. That's my motto."

"Oh, you'd go through life tied to Mrs. Grundy's apron strings," retorted Monica with some annoyance.

"Well, I like to be comfortable, and that's more than this beastly tree is. Come on out of it. I'll go down first and catch you if you slip."

Monica's eyes flashed, her small chin stuck out doggedly. Double harness was sometimes a little galling to her slim shoulders, but just at that moment the sound of cook banging their dinner gong in the Grange garden, reminded her that she was very hungry, and they returned to earth, leaving the ladder for the gardener to fetch when he came back from the village.

A letter on the dinner table, however, made them forget all about it. Montague absorbed its contents with his usual complacence. "From Alice," he said, and tossed it across to his wife.

Monica's brow clouded. Alice was Montague's married sister, a strong-willed lady of conventional tastes, who ruled her own

household with a rod of iron, and had a weakness for trying to rule other people's in the same manner.

Monica propped the letter against a rose bowl, while she ate her fish, and read as follows:

DEAREST MONTAGUE,

I feel I should like a long *private* chat with you about family affairs, and propose spending to-morrow night at the Grange. If you will let me know what train you go down by I will meet you at Liverpool Street, and I will return to town with you in the morning, which will give us a nice long time together.

Love to Monica. I hope she is well and her maids satisfactory. Much love to you, my dear brother and many thoughts.

Your affectionate sister,

ALICE.

Monica's colour rose.

"I don't think she meant me to see this," she said. "As I'm evidently *de trop*, the best plan will be for me to spend the night with Aunt Julia, so that you and Alice can have it all to yourselves."

"It's a rotten, silly game," panted Montague, as he followed his agile better-half up into the branches, "and we shall both break our legs before we've finished."

"What nonsense!" protested Montague.

"Alice won't think so," replied his wife stubbornly. "She'll be pleased, so shall I, so will Aunt Julia."

"But you must be here to receive your guest."

"No—not when my guest invites herself. You can explain that Aunt Julia is in poor health, and the consequences of a disappointment might be very bad for her."

"But your aunt doesn't even know you are going."

"Well, you needn't tell Alice that," said Monica. "Express my sorrow at my unavoidable absence, and she'll be only too happy to accept my regrets. Remember Alice doesn't like me, to start with. She's never forgiven me for marrying you, my boy; even if I were the most beautiful and intelligent woman in the world and a Princess of the blood at that, I shouldn't be good enough to marry into your exalted family."

"How absurd you are, Monica."

"Oh, it's all the point of view, anyhow," retorted his wife airily. "Aunt Julia thinks our family is as good as yours, and she's convinced you've got a treasure. It will do me good to have a day with the dear old thing, and it will do you good to have twenty-four hours of undiluted Alice."

"It will do me more good if you will receive her and try to get on more affectionate terms together."

"That's where we differ," said Monica stubbornly. "Alice is a great lady—she snubs me in all sorts of ways you don't understand; she overpowers me; to tell the truth, I'm a bit frightened of her. She doesn't like my manners. She's stately and conventional and I'm not, and never shall be; we're better friends apart."

"Well, it will be against my wishes if you go," said Montague.

"And it will be against Alice's if I stay," replied his wife. "Look here, chum, I'll toss you for it—heads I go, tails I stay—but I shall arrange to go in any case."

And she did. The two letters fell into the post-box side by side, Monica's to her Aunt announcing her visit the next afternoon, and Montague's to his sister arranging the time of meeting, and explaining his wife's regrettable absence on a visit to her sick relation.

But there was a cloud between them, and though Monica waved him a cheery good-bye when he started for town the following morning, she knew he was unhappy, and felt a little down-hearted in consequence.

"But right's *right!*" she said valiantly, as she walked back through the fragrant old garden to the house, and put in a busy morning superintending the arrangements for the comfort of their guest, determined that critical eyes should detect no flaw in the Grange housekeeping. Then quite excited at the prospect of a little jaunt on her own, she set off, after an early tea, and met a telegraph boy at the bend of the road bicycling towards the Grange. The message was addressed to herself, and her heart gave a sickening throb. What if anything had happened to Montague! What if he were lying cold and stiff somewhere while she was disobeying his last wishes! Her hands shook as she tore open the envelope and read:

Please postpone visit. Ethel's children staying here. Full up. AUNT JULIA.

"No answer," said Monica, and the boy mounted his bicycle, leaving her standing in the road, an expression of perplexity and annoyance in her amber eyes.

"That's a nasty jar," she ejaculated. "What am I to do now?"

Return was impossible. How could she explain to her sister-in-law that her visit was off because the "sick" aunt had a swarm of children staying with her. But where was she to go to? Then, as her perplexed glance roved over the park, she caught sight of the old oak tree with the ladder still reared up against the trunk, and an inspiration flashed across her brain, so glorious in its conception that it set her eyes sparkling and brought a quick flush to her cheeks.

Why not? Here was the opportunity she had longed for, of spending a long mysterious summer night among the branches with no one to say her nay and no one to be any the wiser. Of course, Alice would be shocked out of her five senses, but what did that matter? Alice would never know—and as for Montague, of course he would disapprove, but as far as that went Montague need never know, either. A night with nature under the stars instead of in Aunt Julia's spare bed—her pulses thrilled at the thought. A little enterprise and resolution *now* and her life would be all the richer for such a unique experience.

The cook and housemaid were busy picking gooseberries and discussing their love affairs in the kitchen garden when their mistress slipped in at the French window, collected cushions, a rug, a volume of Browning, and a basket full of creature comforts from the larder, and then, like a guilty thing, crept stealthily from her happy home, taking cover under hedge, bush, and tree, and doing the last fifty yards of open ground with thumping pulses and many furtive glances over her shoulder. But the park was deserted, and no suspicious eyes caught sight of the slender, white-clad figure, though she had to make several journeys up the ladder before her kit and rations were snugly stowed away in her lonely and lofty bivouac.

The nest took some feathering; there was a cupboard to be found for the food, a safe

cranny for the Thermos flask of iced lemonade, and the most comfortable of the natural armchairs to be cushioned. Great clefts in the rustling foliage showed blue sky with bars of white cloud to windward, and a sun planing gently down the western sky. Through the lower boughs she could see the park stretching away beneath, and presently, with a little giggle of excitement, perceived the shabby station fly come crawling up the road to the Grange. The hood was thrown back, and it was easy to recognise Montague sitting square and stolid, his devoted sister by his side, and from the dignified gestures of her white-gloved hand and the nodding and bobbing of her feathered hat, it was evident the private conversation was well under way.

"She's got nothing to talk about, really. It's all froth. Poor old Monty!" chuckled the watcher in the branches. "His people may come of fine old stock, but they are very dull. That's why he married me. Oh, what would Alice say if she could see me now! It would be the last act—absolutely."

The fly dropped its passengers and crawled back along the road that divided the pasture like a white ribbon; a faint echo of the Grange dinner gong came echoing across the stillness. The birds fluted and piped before settling to roost, the sun grew bigger and redder, and across the bars of clouds in the east a biplane from the Brookdon Flying Ground rose in a graceful circle, its drone mingling pleasantly with the hum of the summer evening.

The sun set, the bars of cloud changed to rose and grey and black on an azure and daffodil sky.

"A sunset without clouds," mused Monica dreamily, "is as insipid as married life without quarrels."

With a cushion at her head and her feet tucked away on the natural footstool of a twisted bough, Monica was just wondering if the wing of a chicken and a jam puff would give her keener zest for the waking of the summer stars or whether the waking of the summer stars would give her keener zest for the wing of a chicken and a jam puff, when a sudden succession of crashes in the boughs above her sent her heart into her mouth and her hands spasmodically clutching the sides of her natural armchair.

For a second she thought it might be some monstrous night bird bursting through the branches. But it was no bird, for next moment she perceived with mingled horror and amazement a pair of legs in grey flannel trousers kicking the air galvanically among a rain of falling leaves and twigs. By some mysterious and unaccountable agency a human being of the other sex was being dragged remorselessly through the tree top. A grunt of pain, a futile effort on the part of those kicking legs to twine round a branch, pointed to the fact that here was a fellow-creature in danger and distress.

Without a moment's hesitation Monica sprang to her feet, clutched at a leg, a coat, a shoulder, and held on like grim death, till, with a jerk, the mysterious dragging power was broken, and a young man, dishevelled and panting, practically fell into her arms. At the same moment a large iron ring released from his clutch, tore through the twigs, caught on to the top of the ladder and heeled it over with a dull crash on to the grass, while a huge, bellying mass went hurtling on over the ground and collapsed, a limp, shapeless, silent thing on the dusky thorn bushes below.

"Oh!" exclaimed Monica. "Whatever is it?"

"My parachute," panted the young man. "The question is, should you call this a successful descent or not? By rights, I ought to have reached the ground."

"Well, if you *had*, you'd have been broken to bits," replied Monica, also gasping a little.

"I know," he said. "Thanks awfully for hanging on to me! A parachute's all right when you're well up, but it's a bit of a demon when it drags you through trees and things! You've no idea how helpless you feel!"

"Well, I know how helpless your legs *looked*," said Monica; "that's why I clutched hold of them."

"Jolly good of you. Couldn't think what it was—never expected to find a girl up a tree."

"And I never expected to find a man," she retorted, and they both laughed long and breathlessly.

"I wonder you didn't get your face scratched off in the twigs," said Monica. "Are you hurt at all?"

"Only this," he replied, and held up his wrist, which showed a dark cut in the twilight, and blood flowing down his sleeve.

"Oh, I'll see to that," said Monica. "I'm rather a nut at bandaging," and with professional dexterity she bound the injury with her handkerchief and pinned it with her brooch, while he told her about his adventure with boyish enthusiasm—how he had been waiting all day at Brookdon for the wind to

drop, to try his parachute, and, finally, at sundown, made the descent from the biplane she had seen, but found more breeze than he expected, and got carried right out of his course.

"But I should have got down all right if a gust hadn't come at the last moment and sent me bang into the tree."

"Bad luck," said Monica. The boy looked at her.

"I'm not so sure," he replied, and they both laughed long and merrily.

"The question is," continued Monica, "how are we going to get down? Since your parachute has mislaid the ladder, it seems to me that here we are, and here we've got to stop."

"What a lark!" he exclaimed, "but, I say, it's rather rough on you, I suppose. Hullo! there's a house over there. I'll give 'em a hail."

"Oh no—*no*," cried Monica, a scared look coming into her eyes. "I'd rather not. We must think of some other way, really. I'll explain afterwards. Meanwhile, won't you have some supper?" Five minutes later the table was spread, the dainties arranged, and the crescent moon, peeping between the branches was the only spectator of the very merriest meal that had ever taken place in an oak tree.

"This is ripping!" observed the parachutist when the repast was over and he was smoking a cigarette while Monica munched chocolate. "Supper in the branches with a tree fairy. I wish my mother could see me now."

"I'm glad my husband can't," commented Monica.

"Your *what!*" he ejaculated. "Don't say you're married!"

The tree fairy laughed and nodded and held up a small left hand with a gold circle on the third finger. "That's my house over there. My husband thinks I'm spending the night with my Aunt Julia, but as a matter of fact, I've run away here from a terrible dragon of a sister-in-law."

Moonlight makes for confidences, especially when two youthful adventurers are wrecked on a lonely tree-top together, so Monica with many little liquid chuckles told him all about it, and they were both so interested in the recital that they never noticed a big motor-car sliding down the road and pulling up at the Grange.

But presently, as their tongues ran on in delightful discussions on men and women, aeroplanes and things in general, a couple of lamps, evidently carried by hand, and flickering hither and thither across the dark surface of the pasture land, pulled them up with a jerk, and at a distant, prolonged halloo, the parachutist exclaimed:

"Oh, dash it! That's old Tyrell from the Aerodrome, come to look for me. Well he can look. I shan't answer."

"But you must!" exclaimed Monica. "They'll find the parachute and see the ladder lying down and they'll guess what's happened. No, you must go, and I'll stop where I am."

"I'm not going to leave you here by yourself"

"But you *must*, please. After all I'm only carrying out my original programme. Why if they found I was here too, Alice would never understand it was an accident; in fact, she wouldn't try to. They mustn't know I'm here, *really*. So don't give me away. Call out to them now, only when you get down make them leave the ladder where it is."

Her voice was so eager and determined that he obeyed, though there was more annoyance than enthusiasm in his answering hail.

Five minutes later the lamps reached the old oak tree, and through a peep-hole in the boughs Monica saw her husband and a stranger rearing the ladder against the trunk. The parachutist gripped her hand hard, whispered "good luck," and descended. Through the darkness she heard him break off in the middle of answering their questions to ask them to leave the ladder where it was and collect his parachute and take it back to the car for him, as his damaged wrist prevented him doing it for himself.

Once more the lanterns receded across the park back to the Grange, and after what seemed a long interval, the sentinel in the oak tree heard the motor-car go down the road, saw the lights of the Grange go out one by one, and once more the deep silence of the night wrapped round her like a pall.

But the gilt was off the gingerbread. Monica felt lonely, not to say nervous. A big white owl flapped into the branches and scared her out of her wits, and presently it began to rain. Too cramped and damp and depressed to sleep, she watched the grey dawn creep up the east; the sunrise was off that morning, but instead, the wind rose and the swaying foliage sent showers of raindrops scattering over her.

Never was sight more welcome to red-rimmed, weary eyes than the old station fly trundling along to the Grange at 9.30. The

"Oh, I'll see to that," said Monica. 'I'm rather a nut at bandaging," and with professional dexterity she bound the injury with her handkerchief and pinned it with her brooch.

sky had cleared, the wind had fallen, the pasture land twinkled with myriad sparkles, and as her relation by marriage again drove by, Monica could see by the nodding of the feathered hat and the gesticulations of the white-gloved hands that a night in the country had not in any way impaired her sister-in-law's powers of conversation.

Then, like a prisoner whose jailers have deserted their charge, Monica came down to earth and once more stealthily entered her own house while the maids were entertaining the butcher at the back door. The remnants of breakfast were still left on the table, and with a ravenous sparkle in her amber eyes, Monica made a hasty but substantial meal.

Then, adjusting her rather dishevelled appearance, she announced her return to the

kitchen, and remarking she thought she had got a chill and would go to bed, ordered hot coffee and a hot water bottle. Possibly the former disturbed her sleep, for she dreamt she was careering through the sky attached to a parachute, ever pursued by a large owl with the face of her sister-in-law who tried incessantly to peck her eyes out through a long succession of nightmares.

Altogether it was a wan-faced little wife who waited in the garden when Montague came down the road that evening.

"Well," he said slowly, "had a good time?"

Monica's head drooped; there was an unconcealed solicitude in his eyes that defied deception.

"Not altogether," she replied, "and you?"

"Alice bored me stiff," he said simply.

Her heart leapt. She looked him straight in the face.

"Chum," she faltered, "I didn't go to Aunt Julia's at all. I had a wire when I was starting to say she was full up, so I spent the night in the old oak tree instead, and that nice boy fell out of his parachute into the branches, and I entertained him to supper."

"I know," said Montague quietly.

Monica's eyes blazed.

"What!" she ejaculated, "did he give me away?"

"Not intentionally, but I took him to my room to strap up his wrist, and found this in the bandage," replied her husband. Putting his hand in his pocket, he drew out Monica's brooch.

"Of course," he added quietly, "he had to explain to me how it came there. But he was very unhappy about it, and so was I when I thought of you up there all by yourself."

There was a moment's silence; then Montague suddenly opened his arms and Monica flew to her home on his breast.

"I wanted to come and fetch you down," he murmured, "but I knew how you'd hate it."

"I w-wish you had," sobbed Monica, "at least—I'm glad you d-didn't. In any case, I'll n-never go up the b-beastly old tree again."

But she did. In fact, before the summer was over, they built a proper tree-house in the branches, with a boarded floor and a railing, and a permanent staircase, and it was there that the parachute boy found them on the occasion of his second call, which he paid, by the way, in a much more ceremonious manner than his first.

LITTLE WILLIE.

Little Willie's Great-Aunt Kate
  One day came to tea;
Willie sat up stiff and straight,
  Still as still could be.

Suddenly a fuss and clatter!
  Pussy, howling, fled.
"Goodness gracious! what's the matter!"
  Everybody said.

Little Willie shook with fright,
  Waiting to be whipped;
"Please," he said (well-mannered mite!),
  "Please, my slipper slipped."

For The Children In War Time

Miss Phyllis Monkman, of the Alhambra Theatre, has very kindly consented to appeal this year in the ROYAL on behalf of the Fresh Air Fund—the Children's Charity. It exists, as most readers of the ROYAL know, to send City children to the country in the summer time. Ninepence pays for a day's holiday for one child. £8 2s. pays for a party of 200, with necessary attendants, and ten shillings sends a child to the country for a fortnight. All working expenses are borne by the promoters, and the whole of the money subscribed directly benefits the children. Please send subscriptions to the Hon. Sec. F.A.F., care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.—Ed. R.M.

I AM going to tell you about a most curious little incident that happened in connection with my work for the Fresh Air Fund.

I was spending the afternoon with a girl friend who is very interested in social work. She took me to the home of a poor seamstress whose husband is at the Front. In a corner of the barely furnished room I noticed a copy of the ROYAL MAGAZINE, a few weeks old, which had evidently been lent by the Settlement.

Well, we chatted to the seamstress (over a cup of very strong tea), when presently her little girl returned from school—a child, I should say, of about twelve or thirteen.

"Now, Milly, just sit down and be good," said the mother, a trifle severely. "She's such a one for caperin' about," she added to us.

That made me interested in the child at once. For to be quite frank, I am a bit of "a one for caperin' about" myself.

Milly settled herself in the corner of the room and began to turn over the pages of the ROYAL. Presently I saw her staring at me in open-mouthed astonishment.

"What is it, Milly?" I asked. She was shy at first, and I had to coax her. Then she came over and handed me the ROYAL opened at the page that contained a full-length portrait of myself—my last appeal to you on behalf of the F.A.F.

"It's *you*, miss," she said in an awed whisper.

Photo Chancellor, Hastings.

Miss Phyllis Monkman, who makes an eloquent appeal for the Fresh Air Fund.

I laughingly admitted the charge, and in due course we said good-bye to the seamstress. We had nearly reached the bottom of the staircase when I heard a step. It was Milly.

"I'm glad it's you, miss," she said shyly—and I knew she was still thinking of the picture.

"Why, Milly?"

"Because I know you'll make them come to my school," was the confident reply. "We went last year, and it was lovely, but they said we couldn't go this year because of the war. You'll make them come, won't you, miss?"

I don't know what I said to Milly. I felt confused—I think it was her simple, childish faith in me that did it. Shall I be able to justify that faith? That is a question which I am going to leave you to answer. There is only one way in which I can "make" the Fresh Air Fund take Milly for a day of delirious happiness in the country—and that is by raising enough money. Will you help me?

Phyllis Monkman

ROBERT'S STEP-BROTHER

By One of Them.

The duties of the Regular Police are now being taken over almost entirely in many places by the Special Police, in order to free the regulars for military duty. The Specials have done good service already throughout the country, and are going to do more. This article provides a brief character sketch of them, and an outline of their duties.—EDITOR, R.M.

Many superficial citizens think it is clever to laugh at special constables. The music halls and revues vie with one another in burlesquing the man with the armlet and baton. At least one section of the community, however, takes the special constabulary quite seriously, and even has an admiration for them—namely, the regular police.

While the people who think them funny are snoring in bed, the special constables, after a full day's work at their various occupations, are walking about, often in the rain, looking after the scoffers and admirers alike with benevolent impartiality. They will turn up at business the next day a little dark about the eyes from want of sleep, and that is all there is to it. They draw no pay and they wear their own clothes, with a few exceptions. They cannot resign their constabulary if they don't like it, except on serious grounds, such as ill-health.

Some thousands of the Metropolitan and City police have joined the colours, not to speak of police in big provincial towns, and their work is being done gratis in their absence by "specials."

There is no honour or glory, and except in rare cases, no excitement. The special constable's duty is a long, drab, monotonous stretch of the most acute boredom. He often has to do what he knows is stupid by the order of his superiors, such as counting all the spades in a village. The work is done willingly and capably, and the special asks for no meed of admiration. He does feel, however, that the public needn't laugh at him. Perhaps it won't soon.

Whatever may have been the case at the outbreak of the war, there is not much use for any man of military age to try to join the special police unless he is married and has genuine ties which prevent him from enlisting, and in some districts not even then. Apart from this restriction, the process is simple.

When the appointment of special constables has been decreed and suitable men have been selected, the local justices of the peace administer to every man the following oath, or cause him to make a declaration to the same effect:—

I, A.B., do swear that I will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the Office of Special Constable for the Parish (or Township) of ——— without Favour or Affection, Malice or Ill-will; and that I will to the best of my Power cause the peace to be kept and preserved, and prevent all Offences against the Persons and Properties of His Majesty's Subjects; and that while I continue to hold the said Office I will to the best of my Skill and Knowledge discharge all the duties thereof faithfully according to law. So help me God.

If a man wishes to become a special constable he should apply at his local police

The man with the armlet does not ask for admiration, but he does resent the attitude of those superficial citizens who think him fair game for their empty-headed jeers.

station. When he is appointed, he will be given an armlet, striped alternately with white and blue vertical stripes, to be worn on the left arm above the elbow, his warrant, giving him authority to act, a truncheon, and a whistle. While on duty he has exactly the same powers as a regular policeman.

For instance, he can arrest anyone without a warrant if a charge has been made, and he has reasonable ground for suspecting that a felony has been committed. He may also make an arrest on seeing a breach of the peace, but he must not do so after the affair is over. And if anyone assaults or opposes him in the execution of his duty, he may arrest that person also. The town special constable follows more or less the routine of street work, tedious and unexciting, as far as I have been able to gather from friends in the ranks. Personally, all my nine months' service has been in a small country village, which is in a military area. Our excitements leave the average detective novel or spy story stone cold.

I have carried out patrols at all hours of the night on foot, on a bicycle and a motor-cycle. I have crept up in the dark to culverts on the railway line in the early days of the war when neurasthenic signalmen stabbed themselves, tore down their telephone apparatus, and swore German spies had attacked them. In those days we all went armed surreptitiously, contrary to orders, and expected to be shot by armed Germans at any moment. It was thrilling.

I have helped count the spades in the village and made house to house visitations inquiring for carrier pigeons I knew were not there. (Probably the public does not know that exhaustive returns of live stock, implements, etc., have been made, for military reasons, largely by the special police.) I have assisted drunken gentlemen out of the direct path of automobiles, and been inspected by a Lord Lieutenant. I have entered public houses full of uproarious Tommies and warned the landlord solemnly against serving them after 8.30 p.m. I have watched for Zeppelins (by order) and not seen any. I have been given typewritten descriptions of armed spies and told to look out for and arrest them.

This is the truth and nothing but the truth, but certainly not the whole truth.

From a comparatively safe position in the motor section I now patrol in comfort, occasionally conveying my Captain in a side-car at dizzy midnight speeds to inspect points. But it is all rich red life with the juice left in,

When there are dreary jobs to be done, such as that of counting the spades in a village, it is the "special" who is pressed into service.

and the only special I know that I envy is a man who is a veteran of the Southend riots, and has been bombed by Zeppelins.

Of course, the special's life has its inevitable disappointments. There was the day when we all paraded by appointment in a biting east wind to be inspected by the Chief Constable and he never turned up. There was the day when we paraded in full force to assist in billeting troops, and their O.C. observed somewhat abruptly to our O.C.:

"—— it, man, I haven't got time to bother about people like you!"

It was some consolation to know that the ——shires took about four hours to billet themselves. We could have billeted them in half-an-hour.

I shall not forget the funeral of one of our men who died of complications that set in after a cold caught when on duty in a blizzard. Our company includes all grades of society, and all the men turned out to do him honour.

It was a vile day. Up the village street and along the road to the churchyard on the hill we led him home at the slow march. At the lych-gate the company halted and faced inwards, and they bore him through the ranks to his grave, one who had given his life for his country no less than the men who sleep in Flanders and the north of France.

You had better not laugh at our villagers when they wear the armlet on their arm. They are men who get up at four or five o'clock in the morning and go to bed between eight and nine at night. Consequently night duty is no joke to them.

We have known hard times, as, for instance, when last November and December we roamed the hills at midnight searching for the exhibitors of certain mysterious lights, at the request of the Military Intelligence Officer. But there is a certain rude justice in this life, as the story of the aeroplane witnesseth.

The aeroplane came down in a lone ploughed field near a small hamlet on the outskirts of our district, and damaged itself in landing. Naturally there had to be a guard set over it—a military guard one would have said. The officer of the day thought otherwise, and telephoned to the captain of special police, saying it was a matter for them.

Cursing fluently, the captain of police borrowed a car, hied him to the hamlet, and put on two wretched constables, labourers who had done a day's work, and there they stayed from eight p.m. till morn in the ploughed field guarding the aeroplane. Two more constables released them, and spent the wet and weary day in the ploughed field with the aeroplane.

Chancing to meet the Colonel of the battalion nearest the derelict aeroplane, the police captain suggested that the guarding thereof was a job for the Colonel's men, not the police.

"Certainly," replied the Colonel. "My men are guarding it. Here is Lieutenant X.'s report."

He produced the report, which included a nice map with the position of the aeroplane marked thereon.

"But," said the police captain, "Lieutenant X. refused to guard the thing, and my men were out all last night, and are out now."

The Colonel telephoned to Lieutenant X., and spoke winged words. The special constables went off duty, and the men of the Colonel's battalion came on.

They had to guard the aeroplane three solid winter weeks, day and night, and it was in the middle of a ploughed field—a large ploughed field.

These few reminiscences may open the eyes of the public to the extensive operations performed by the special police.

A special constable can arrest anyone without a warrant if a charge has been made, and he has reasonable ground for suspecting that a felony has been committed.

For Soldiers and Sailors Too

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a soldier or sailor. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The C.O., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

HOME SERVICE.

An officer, in going round a batch of recruits, stopped in front of one and said:

"Now, my man, what are you—Roman Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, or what?"

"I'm Home Service, sir," was the prompt reply.

FEW AND FAR BETWEEN.

"Well, have you ever had any regimental cake?" asked one khaki-clad warrior of another.

"No! What sort of cake is that?"

"Well, it's one day's march from one currant to another."

A WELCOME FRIEND.

An Irishman in His Majesty's Forces came struggling home, an hour before midnight, a little merry.

SENTRY: "Who is that?"

TOMMY: "Murphy an' frien'."

SENTRY: "Who is the friend?"

TOMMY: "Whisky bottle."

SENTRY: "Pass, Murphy! Halt, friend!"

TEMPY. SEC. LIEUT.

A Staff Quartermaster-Sergeant's rank is denoted by four inverted chevrons worn on the lower part of each sleeve.

Inverted chevrons are also used as good conduct badges for private soldiers, but are worn on the lower part of the left sleeve only.

A Staff Quartermaster-Sergeant once had the temerity to argue with his superior officer, a newly-joined very young Second-Lieutenant, who, very indignant, exclaimed:

"I am surprised that an old soldier like you, with all those good conduct badges, should dare to argue with your superior officer."

Collapse of S.Q.M.S.

A GRIM FATE!

IRISH SERGEANT: "If you don't fall in at once, I'll march off the whole company and leave every-one of you behind."

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

We were coaling at a port quite recently somewhere in the North Sea, and, as the majority of persons are aware by this, neutral merchant ships, thinking it will lessen their chance of being torpedoed, have their name and nationality painted on their ship's side. Imagine our amazement to see come steaming into port a ship bearing the following: CLEANTHIS GREECE. I haven't heard of the Huns accepting the challenge and wiping off the grease spot yet.

HARD TO LOCATE.

Recently one of H.M. ships, engaged on patrol duty, was endeavouring to enter a well-known harbour in a dense fog, and everyone was listening intently for the sound of the foghorn on the pier. Suddenly the lookout man heard the bark of a dog, and reported the fact to the Commander on the bridge, and between them the following amusing dialogue took place:

LOOKOUT MAN: "I can hear a dog barking, sir."

COMMANDER: "Where away?"

LOOKOUT MAN: "On the starboard bow, sir."

COMMANDER: "That's all very well, but the awkward part of it is that the dog is not marked on the chart."

COMPLICATED!

CORPORAL (giving instructions for fixing bayonets): "On the command 'Fix!' you whip 'em out, and whip 'em on, and let 'em fix awhile. On the command 'Unfix!' you take 'em off the gun and put 'em back where you took 'em from."

"TOUJOURS LE SPORT!"

A Story of Pig-Sticking at the Front.

By F. A. Symons.

Half-a-foot of luscious mud carpeted the bottom of the trench, a cold fog enveloped what had once been a wheatfield, and the spasmodic bursting of shells overhead accentuated the rottenness of all things earthly.

Tommy Mead, senior subaltern of what was left of the Royal Grasshires, curled his long legs beneath him on a mackintosh sheet in his dug-out, absent-mindedly fingered the mud on his knees, and grunted.

"Good hunting day, Tommy!" commented his captain. "Wonder who is running the old pack at home to-day?" He laughed lightly. "Gad! it seems to me that the foxes are getting a bit of their own back. We've been gone to ground for three days now with divil a run for our money."

"H'm!" Nodding his head over his left shoulder, Mead chuckled. "We have more to show than the Thrusters. They haven't had a proper scrap for a week. That little surprise party of ours by moonlight was one up for us, and improved my revolver aim quite a lot."

A volley of bullets from the enemy's trenches, less than a hundred yards away, drew the speaker suddenly to his feet.

"Hullo, what's that? Something moving!"

To show a head unnecessarily above the trench was not good enough. The vigilance of picked snipers from the copse on the right-front had been firmly established. Cautiously he reached a spy-hole. A roar of derisive laughter from the left-flank, followed by jibes in indifferent German thrown at the enemy, gave him his answer. The mist had suddenly cleared. A turnip on a bayonet, surmounted by a dilapidated khaki cap, hovering above the Thrusters' trench, had apparently pulled the Germans' legs for the second time that day.

The top of a biscuit tin, cut into the form of a cross, and labelled "Iron cross for winner," promptly replaced the turnip. The enemy's field-glasses did not fail to note the jeer. A second fusilade of anger was the result.

The usual lull followed, and the mist fell once more. Every ear, however, was on the *qui vive*. To relax a vigilant watch might mean irremediable disaster.

Presently an extraordinary grunting noise, slowly advancing up the line between the opposing trenches, drew everyone not on duty to their posts.

Private Murphy, the officers' mess cook, his fingers twitching on the trigger, glanced along his rifle barrel.

"Jabers!—'tis a pig!" he breathed at last, turning to his companions.

A moment later there was no doubt that Murphy's diagnosis was correct, for, upon a breath of wind clearing the air, a half-grown porker was discerned quietly grubbing for roots. The fatuous face of a dead German seemed to be smiling upon the animal, but the latter paid no more attention than if it had been a log of wood.

A deserted farmhouse, a quarter-of-a-mile away, explained the beast's presence; but the onlookers asked no questions. That a healthy-looking, edible pig should be flourishing his charms in their faces was not to be borne lightly.

Murphy's rifle started the game. The bullet, glancing off the pig's hind-quarters, brought forth squeals of disgust. Turning tail, he bolted helter-skelter to the left. A dozen bullets missed him by a miracle. The Germans, suffering from acute nerves, opened an inefficient machine-gun fire on the trenches. The Grasshires, however, were not to be deflected by side issues from their prey. Germans were ever present. Shooting at a running pig provided a gala day.

Private Murphy, the officers' mess cook, his fingers twitching on the trigger, glanced along his rifle barrel. "Jabers!—'tis a pig!" he breathed at last, turning to his companions.

With yells of joy revolvers now opened fire at a rapidly increasing range. The porker fled like one possessed with a devil of many lives.

"*Toujours le Sport!*" ejaculated the French interpreter.

Like the sudden drop of a stage curtain the mist fell again. A bullet from the Thrusters' lines had decided the hog to pause for consideration. That he was not yet killed, however, was plainly apparent by a medley of grunts and squeals slowly changing position. That the Thrusters should capture the spoil of the chase was not to be thought of.

"Shooting by sound with a Service revolver isn't quite what I have been brought up to, but here goes," cried Mead, loosing off at random.

The snort of anger and pain which followed produced a cheer of applause. The men were as excited as if a league football match were in progress.

"Glory be, but he is killed entoirely!" declared Murphy with characteristic inconsistency. "'Tis roasted for supper this night, sor, we'll be havin' him."

That the animal had been hit seemed obvious. That he was, however, by no means dead his future movements amply testified.

"Greatly disfigured, but still in the ring," laughed Tommy Mead.

"Shure and 'tis a wicked waste," groaned Murphy. "To think, sor, that thim Thrusters might get him even yet!"

A few more desultory shots into the gathering gloom brought forth no response.

The men, again compelled to face boredom, returned to their lairs. The huge German guns from some miles off pounded away at intervals. Here and there a brazier concealed in the trenches glowed with life-giving warmth. The flare of the enemy's searchlight might soon be expected.

The fall of a moonless night came at last. It grew colder, and the mist disappeared entirely. With the night came the men from the Field Ambulance, collecting sick and wounded under cover of the darkness.

"Shure and there be one wounded, out there in the open, which needs rescuin' badly," explained Murphy to the R.A.M.C.

orderly. "If yez get him I'll give yez the best bite av supper as ever yez had." Smacking his lips exultingly, he borrowed a fag. "A stretcher party is just phwat he wants."

"Where?" inquired the orderly, keen-eyed.

"Stop your fooling, Murphy!" ordered the nearest officer. "You will be getting somebody killed."

"And the poor pig lays widout even a first field-dressing for his wounds," grumbled Murphy with a grin.

The medical contingent having departed, the vigilance of the night grew more acute than ever. If there was to be an attack it would come before morning. The officer commanding had his orders, but what those were none but he knew.

The Grasshires, sitting hunched up in their shelter, discussed the situation *ad nauseam*. If the enemy would only come out into the open and meet them with bayonet, the men asked for nothing better. That "he also serves who only stands and waits" is an excellent adage nobody will deny, but, like others of its kind, its excellence does not make healthy pulses throb the less for action.

It must have been close upon dawn when heavy musketry volleys from the extreme left awoke the Grasshires to excited activity. The French guns, shelling a German position, followed. A German field searchlight, located in a copse, shot its white column frantically from one point to another. For an instant it passed along the Grasshire trenches, shot across in error to its own trenches, and returned to the Thrusters.

In that moment the men of the Grasshires had seen what some of them had been looking for. It was Murphy who voiced the discovery.

"Be gob!" he cried. "There he is—not twenty yards off, lyin' as quiet as a lamb between two stinkin' dead *Allemagnes*."

"Who? What?" demanded Lieutenant Mead, his finger on his revolver trigger.

"The pig, sor, to be shure."

There was, however, no time for conversation. Spiked helmets, pouring from the direction of the copse in flank attack, and covered by a ravishing artillery fire, advanced *en masse*. The Thrusters, with exultant cheers and fixed bayonets, sprang from their trenches.

The Grasshires, seeing their opportunity, needed no further orders. In a moment, with teeth clenched and the flare of battle in their faces, they threw themselves across the open ground between the trenches.

What exactly happened next, who can possibly tell? To attempt to describe detail in a night attack is but to court the fate of all liars. Nevertheless, certain it is that in the *mêlée* that followed, half a hundred witnesses can testify to the fact that a pig, squealing madly, rose up before them and lolloped on three legs in advance.

The fight at the edge of the German trenches is a matter of history. A hail of bullets, as was to be expected, met the invaders. If a hundred killed and wounded was the result, who can accurately number the Germans killed, and those who fled?

Tommy Mead was one of those fortunate enough to escape unscathed. As the daylight advanced he proceeded to assess casualties. The medical officer was already hard at work. To collect wounded before the enemy's fire opened afresh was a matter of urgency.

Inside the captured trenches all was chaos. Germans, dead and dying, lay mingled with their foes in like condition. Language lurid in at least two languages mingled with prayers for succour. Outside, the sorting was less difficult.

Suddenly the clamour of what appeared to be a single combat arose from the far end of the trench. A wounded and desperate enemy can often be quite as dangerous as an able-bodied one.

"Let go, ye divil!" came in a muffled voice above the din.

"By Jupiter, I believe it is Murphy!" cried Mead, his mind automatically reverting to the fact that he was feeling the need of breakfast.

The next moment there was no doubt whatever that Private Murphy indeed it was, and following upon his protest came the unearthly shrieks of a hog in agony.

The men, running in from all quarters, looked for tragedy. To Murphy himself the situation undoubtedly savoured of tragedy. When the meaning of the scene revealed itself, however, to the onlookers, a roar of laughter rent the air. The fugitive Germans heard and marvelled.

"Go it, Murphy! Good old sport!" yelled the men in chorus.

"Let go, ye thaif!" grunted Murphy, apparently half-throttled.

From beneath a veritable heap of bodies the pig, mad with pain and terror, had extricated himself, and, hanging to the wretched animal's tail was the long, sinewy arm of Murphy. The tragedy, in Murphy's mind,

lay in the fact that another hand, equally sinewy, gripped his arm above the wrist, whilst its owner's free arm encircled Murphy's neck.

The spectators needed little time in which to grasp the situation. The enemy in their midst — a notable foraging rival of Murphy's — was nobody less than the officers' mess servant of the Thrusters.

The Grasshires were Britons—consequently they loved fair play. That they outnumbered the Thrusters' champion by several hundred to one influenced them not at all. It is true that they continued to encourage Murphy by giving tongue in many weird and unrepeatable words, but, none the less, they cheered the adversary nobly when he scored a point.

With the regiment's eyes upon him Murphy's strength seemed to increase tenfold. The pig suffered much. He was bleeding from a dozen wounds, but fought heroically. Eventually, by a desperate wriggle, the latter literally dragged Murphy after him. It was the man's final effort. The pig was free.

Hanging to the wretched animal's tail was the long, sinewy arm of Murphy. . . . another hand, equally sinewy, gripped his arm above the wrist, whilst its owner's free arm encircled Murphy's neck.

That the object of the combatants was to capture the pig was plain. They cared nothing for a personal quarrel. Therefore, the pig loose, the Thrusters' champion had no further use for Murphy and dropped him like a hot potato.

The next second Murphy, red-eyed and panting, had scrambled to his feet and seized the nearest rifle with fixed bayonet. His opponent did the same. The pig, at record speed, fled incontinently across dead and living bodies. A trench, however, has its limitations, as even a clever pig must at length realise.

With a shout of victory Murphy got his bayonet home by a fraction of a second before his adversary's. The latter, wiping the sweat from his brow with a hand which had not been washed for weeks, swore quietly, but accepted his defeat like a man. Later on, Murphy presented him with a fat hind-quarter.

The French interpreter at breakfast poised a generous mouthful of grilled pork on his fork and bowed to the rest of the mess.

"*Toujours le sport!*" said he.

The Leading Lady

We have been fortunate enough to secure this charming story from the pen of Miss Marie Löhr, the famous young actress. Everyone who has seen Miss Löhr act will expect great things of her as an author—and they will not be disappointed.

—Ed. R.M.

Miss Marie Löhr.

By Marie Löhr

SHE had not always been a Star.

In fact, only three years ago, at a salary which reached the princely figure of twenty-one shillings weekly, she had toured, and struggled, and—starved.

She had known what it was to go to bed hungry and get up hungrier. She had walked on rainy nights from dingy lodgings to a dingier theatre, in shoes that badly wanted patching. She broke her heart over her shoes again and again. They wore out, oh, so quickly!

But she had stuck to it. Filled with a fierce, desperate love of her chosen profession—the harshest and also the most generous in the world—she battled on, week after week. For she could act. She *knew* she could act! Robbed of her ineradicable conviction on this point, she would have packed her simple bag and crept home, beaten, after crying herself to sleep because she was so cold and hungry and lonely. But she *knew* she could act. And so she stuck to her guns.

That was three years ago—or was it three centuries?

And to-day Eva Evelyn was a name to conjure with throughout the length and breadth of stageland.

Eva Evelyn became successful by a stroke of luck. But, in addition, she possessed genius. So success, in her case, came to stay.

She was the biggest draw in London in legitimate drama.

As leading lady at the theatre which stood first, dramatically, in the magical West-End ring, she was responsible for crowded houses nightly in a play that had seen two hundred performances, and would probably last over a year.

Her attractive name—Eva Evelyn—stared at her from hoardings, 'bus-tops, posters, and the backs of sandwichmen, often in letters many feet high. It twinkled and winked in brilliant lighted lines outside the theatre. It represented money, fame, position to the woman who owned it; and yet she was not really happy, not quite satisfied.

Her salary ran into three figures, and she deserved it. Her furs were wonderful. Her small house was perfect of its kind. Her

low, grey motor-car was the most comfortable thing in automobiles. Yet three years ago she had been starving. That is the Stage.

The curtain was down; the house was emptying after a crowded matinée. Alone in her long, rose-walled dressing-room, Eva Evelyn slipped her arms in a pale pink kimono.

"Turn out the big lights, Brownie," she directed, addressing her maid. "Just leave the little one on my table, and that one by the fire. Thank you. And give me a comb and my hand-glass, please. When Mr. Hanbury arrives, ask George to bring him down—the gentleman from the *Monitor*, tell him."

Brownie nodded, and went out, closing the door softly.

Five minutes later, when the stage-door keeper announced "Mr. 'Anbury, please, miss," she was combing her hair lazily.

"Oh, please come in—I'm expecting you," said Eva Evelyn, and stood up to greet him.

She had drawn her thick, waving hair straight back from her forehead, and gathered it into a loose knot, low in her neck. Her face was still made-up, ready for the stage, but adoring audiences never beheld her without a proper coiffure from across the footlights. This was a new, strange Eva.

The man who entered at her invitation had seen her scores of times, in many parts, and always thought her beautiful. But he realised that she had never looked lovelier than at that moment, standing in her dimly-lighted room, like some young goddess, with her severe coiffure and her simple, clinging wrap.

She smiled at him and indicated a comfortable chair.

"Let's 'browse,'" she insisted. "I always do between the shows—just lounge and rest, and feel delightfully slack and lazy. It's the finest way to get up one's strength, don't you think, for fresh exertions? Anyhow, I'm sure you'll get a much better interview if we both 'browse' merrily."

He laughed, and drew out a small pad and pencil. Though he had longed for this moment—and the moments that were still to come—as a thirsty man longs for water in the desert, he did not feel nervous as he sat at last before the woman he adored.

"You are very good to me," he told her—quite gravely. "When I wrote asking you for this interview, I expected, at the most, a bundle of press cuttings, a few hurried sentences at the stage-door or in the wings, or a telephone communication from your secretary."

Her fine teeth shone as she smiled.

"I don't possess a secretary. Press cuttings are necessary, I suppose, but boring. In fact, Mr. Hanbury, I think I'd better be frank with you. I can't help forgetting that I'm supposed to be a 'leading lady' directly I get off the boards. Sometimes my kind manager gets quite angry with me!"

"So you carry your generosity to the extent of granting half-an-hour of precious rest-time to a complete stranger who comes to bother you with annoying questions on behalf of an inquisitive magazine."

"You don't *bother* me at all," said Eva Evelyn.

He looked at her to see if she spoke sarcastically or not, and noticed that her eyes—shadowed with blue—were large and grey, with big black pupils; such lovely eyes—such *human* eyes. And her mouth, with its firm, curved lips, just faintly reddened—that was human, too, and full of sympathy.

She lifted a nail-pad from the table at her elbow, and began to polish her nails.

"This doesn't annoy you, does it? It soothes me, rather. I can talk better. No, you don't bother me, indeed. When I got your letter"—she made a movement with the nail-pad towards a heap of correspondence—"I—I made up mind I'd like to see you. Your letter was—different, somehow. It interested me. I—I can't explain, exactly—"

He was studying her frankly.

"Don't try," he put in. "It's quite enough for me that I am here, and you are going to tell me something about your life. It must have been an interesting life, Miss Evelyn."

She sighed.

"I suppose so."

Her low, husky voice—one of her greatest charms—fascinated him. On the stage it was arresting, thrilling. In a room it soothed those who listened, like a wonderful caress.

"Interesting—and strange. You know, I owe my present position to an absolute fluke—to the generosity of a man unknown to me. Odd, isn't it? I've never told the full story of my stage life to any interviewer—somehow, the interviewers who have come my way have seemed so precise, so business-like, that I haven't had the courage to bore them with the rather romantic story of my first chance, and how it came to me. I've always felt that they wouldn't quite believe me, and, besides, they didn't fit the story—any of them. So they just got bare facts! Now you—I'd

like to tell you the whole, true story, if I may?"

She leant forward, one round, white arm drooping across her knee. Her eyes were thoughtful, and—was it joy, in addition, that lay in their grey depths?

"I shall be honoured," said the interviewer.

"Thank you."

Eva Evelyn drew back into the sheltering arms of her chair, and pressed her hand across her eyes, shading them.

"It began a little over four years ago."

She spoke slowly, choosing her words with care.

"I'm the daughter of a solicitor—perhaps you know?—a man who owned a small, terribly small practice in a country town. It was all debts, and very little practice, I'm afraid—poor father! After I left school I was discovered to be the possessor of a voice, a good voice. Oh, how I longed to use it, to have it trained properly. Singing has always been my greatest joy, and I wanted to be an operatic star, more than I've ever wanted anything. It is still my dearest wish."

She smiled, very sadly.

"That wish was squashed quickly. There was no money, you see. They wanted me to be a governess, or a companion—something which would give me a home and pocket-money. I had no talents, and no training; what else could I do? But, somehow, the idea seemed awful to me.

"'If I can't sing, I'll *act*,' I vowed to myself. 'Acting doesn't *cost* anything.'

"So I waited till some terrible melodrama visited our small town, and then I sought the manager. He wasn't exactly—nice, but he liked me. And, by some weird stroke of fortune, one of the girls in the company had been left behind the previous week with pneumonia. He engaged me to walk on when necessary, and play two tiny parts. And he offered me one guinea a week. I took it."

He raised his head sharply.

"A guinea a week—you? Was *that* what you were earning when——"

"When I started? Yes," confessed Eva Evelyn. "Of course, there was a terrible scene at home. They begged me not to go—not to be so mad. But I wouldn't listen! Before I left my father's house I gave him a solemn promise that, as long as I was an actress, I would never ask him for a single penny; I would never be a drag on him in that way. If the day came when I had to beg him for money, on that very day I would give up the stage."

She closed her eyes, and went on softly:

"I kept my word. And I starved—starved, and struggled, and wept, as we all do, in this theatre-world, sooner or later. While the tour lasted it was bad enough. When it finished, I found myself in London with five shillings in my pocket. I lived—somehow. I don't care to remember *how*—those things are best forgotten. Then I went out again with another melodrama. And so it went on for nearly a year. All that time I never had a really good meal, I never slept in a really comfortable bed. I never knew a moment's real peace. But I was learning. Then I joined a 'fit-up' company, at twenty-five shillings a week, to play in a popular London drama."

His pencil stopped, and he leant forward, studying her intently.

"They gave me a small part. Before we'd been on the road a fortnight, the girl playing the leading woman's part got married to a rich collier she met by chance, and bolted. Marriage breaks all stage contracts, you know, and they didn't bother to find her. I stepped into her shoes, and played the part till the end of the tour, at *my* salary, not hers."

She bowed her head, and he realised that her eyes were dim with sudden tears.

"It hurts me, even now, to think of those days," she whispered, in half-shamefaced apology. "Oh, how I struggled! But I wouldn't ask my father for a single penny, because I loved the stage too much to give it up. We went on, from week to week, and at last the turning point came."

He shifted his position.

"May I smoke?" he asked nervously, and when the lighted cigarette was between his lips he repeated expectantly:

"The turning point?"

"Yes. We were playing in a funny, northern town. It was winter, and the so-called theatre was just a barn of a place. The stage entrance was down a dark passage, lighted by a single gas-jet. One night, as I came out after the performance, a man stopped me in the dark passage. It was raining and very windy. The constant opening of the stage-door had extinguished the wretched gas-jet, and as the sacred portal banged behind me I found myself in pitch darkness. That was when the man spoke to me.

"A figure stepped out suddenly from the wall and stood in my way. I saw it was a man. I heard—afterwards—it was a gentleman. I remember to this hour the

"I want to tell him how grateful, how thankful I am. I wonder if I ever can?" "You have," said the interviewer, and he stood up as he spoke. "I'm the man." [Page 318, col. 2.]

rain-soaked, heathery smell of his thick overcoat—such a manly, fresh smell. He said, 'Please forgive me. I don't know you, and I won't bother you with the usual senseless supper invitation. But I want to tell you something. May I?'

"I must have nodded, for he went on:

"'I think your performance is *wonderful*. Will you take my advice?'

"Again I nodded, and instantly he put an envelope into my hand.

"'Do you know Mr.——?' he asked, naming a famous actor-manager.

"I confessed that I knew this deity only by name.

"'He's at Manchester—it's just a few miles from this awful place—and he's only there this week. Go over and see him. I know him; he is one of my greatest friends. I've written his private address on the envelope, and a few lines, introducing you, on the paper inside. He won't see you if you go to the theatre—so go to that address, and go soon, and make him give you some work. Good-bye. Good luck.'

"Before I could move or speak he had rushed away, leaving behind him a smell of heathery tweeds, and a letter clutched in my hand."

Eva Evelyn sighed.

"It was the most extraordinary episode in my life," she admitted. "I did not know his name—I don't know it now. I'll tell you why in a minute"—for he had moved restlessly, and seemed anxious to speak.

"I went to see that actor-manager. He was expecting someone else. I was mistaken for that 'somebody,' and before I could announce myself or present the letter, I was ushered into the great man's presence.

"The actor-manager called me Miss 'Er—Er'—he is always delightfully vague. He looked at me, he talked to me, and made me talk to him. Then he engaged me for his next production. I walked out of that room with a contract in my pocket, and the famous letter still in my possession. I had been too dazed and excited to remember it, and in any case it had not been required.

"When I got home I opened it. It was just half-a-dozen lines, written without date or address, praising me and my work, and asking the actor-manager to do what he could for me. And it was signed simply 'Jim.' To that letter Mr. Hanbury, or, rather, to the man who wrote it—the man whose face I never saw, whose name I have never discovered, and whom I have never seen since—I owe my entire fortune, my whole career."

He sat like a graven image, in silence.

"It is three years since he spoke to me, in that windy stage-door passage," continued the Leading Lady. "And I've never forgotten him! I've thought of him, oh, so often, and wondered if it would be my luck to meet him one day, and thank him. I *want* to thank him. I want to tell him how grateful, how thankful I am. I wonder if I ever can?"

"You have," said the interviewer, and he stood up as he spoke. "I'm the man."

There was silence for a second. Then Eva Evelyn sprang up, laughing, and seized his hand.

"I *know!*" she cried. "I knew all the time! That's why I told you."

He was staggered beyond speech.

"You—knew?"

"Yes. I've kept the letter all this time. It was my only clue. When your nice, personally written letter reached me, asking for an interview, I recognised the writing at once. You signed it 'James Hanbury'—not 'Jim.' But I knew! Look!"

Triumphantly she snatched two letters from a drawer in her dressing-table, and held them under his nose.

"Is it the same writing?" she demanded. "And am I a clever woman, or not? Of course, I could hardly believe that *the* James Hanbury—writer and critic—was the man to whom I owe a debt I can never pay, and I couldn't make out, either, why the famous James Hanbury should condescend to do an interview! But I just took the gifts the gods gave me—and here you are!"

He lifted her hand to his lips and kissed it.

"The 'famous' James Hanbury asked for this interview because he *wanted* it," he confessed. "You see, I kept away from you as long as I could, but human endurance has its limits. Also, I had a quaint longing to know if you ever told the *true* story of your stage start to an interviewer—and there you have the whole thing in a nutshell!"

Eva Evelyn's eyes were veiled.

"I don't," she said, referring to the stage and interviewers; "only to *you*. I've been waiting to tell you for three long years. Did I do it well?"

Eva Evelyn is still the Leading Lady. But she runs in double harness with a certain Leading Man, whose initials are "J. H." She calls him Jim, which is perfectly right and proper, considering all things.

: STRENGTH :

By G. B. Lancaster.

" 'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all."

The huts under the palms and the great hano-knotted trees were burnt-umber and brown in the shadow. Along the foreshore where the sun-haze ran on blue, moveless sea and white beach the refuse from the village lay to feed the crabs and the fighting gulls. And within the huts, without them, and around the dying cooking-fires huddled the gaunt red pigs and the fat black babies and the men who slept with the brand of the Pacific stamped on their upturned faces. Among little brown piles of fibre and hemp the women squatted, plaiting fish baskets, beating tappa-cloth, and scraping cocoanut or yams for the next meal of their lords.

Chesney, one-time trader for Blackburn and Barnes, Sydney, Upolu, and Rega, drove his dinghy up the shelving sand and walked through the sleeping groups towards the bleak coral church in the village-heart. He had not come to pray, although he needed prayer as much as he had ever done in his life; knowing this, he was nervous of the missionary who lived in the little grey hut to the left of the church. For Dick Anson was quite as much man as missionary, and he would certainly see to the quick of Chesney's trouble in an eye-blink.

The pods of wild vanilla crackled in the sun, and the broken shell of the path was hot to the foot. Chesney wiped his forehead with a white-sleeved arm and peered into the blank dark of the hut.

"Hallo, Dick!" he called, and from behind someone caught his shoulder.

"Chesney! Good man! I was just wanting you all I knew. There's a sick native——"

Chesney was entitled to more letters than M.D. after his name. But he had flung his learning and its assets into the pig-trough when he had gone to feed there, and he did not care to be reminded of these things.

"Native be hanged! Let him die," he said. "They spawn like black-beetles, these brutes! Dick, can you get me a fireman anywhere? One of mine went off the hooks last night. It was pretty warm in the stoke-hole, I fancy."

Anson rubbed his eyes. The very balls felt shrunken with the heat, and his ears were dulled with weariness. But because he loved this man, his brain was quick.

"Where are you going?" he asked, watching Chesney. And Chesney shrugged.

"Yes," he said. "You've got it in once. I'm going to Bulalo."

Bulalo, down among the Cook Islands, is one of the drinking-hells of the Pacific. There are others, and Chesney knew them all.

"Old man, you promised——"

"Promised? Oh, yes, I've twice given you my word and twice broken it. Now I'm going to Bulalo, and you needn't ask for it a third time." Chesney's thin face showed neither defiance nor pride. Only the sense of the inevitable was heavy upon it. Anson put a hand on his shoulder.

"There's more shade over here—under the cycas. Wait till I get my pipe going and we'll hunt up a fireman. And if you'd look at Kenasi first—a few days proper attention might——"

"Oh, rot! That tack's no good, Dick. I can't wait a few days. You know how last time——"

"Forget that. Let yesterday cover its own sins."

"Yesterday can't cover its sins. Not if you resurrect them to-morrow—as I do and mean to keep on doing." Chesney struck a match to his pipe and laughed unsteadily. "Where's your fireman?"

"Don't think I'm underestimating the matter." Anson spoke slowly. "The man who has never given before temptation has not lived fully, any more than the man who has never been afraid. He has got to know his weakness before he can estimate his strength——"

"Strength!" said Chesney and laughed, kicking up the white pebbles where they dazzled on the edge of the palm-shade.

"Exactly. Strength! Every two or four-footed animal has to test itself in some way. And I believe that the greater number win through. A she-wolf feeds her young though she may be famished with hunger herself——"

"And a man feeds his appetites and doesn't care who may be famished thereby. Don't you talk, Dick. What do you know of it? Have *you* ever fought temptation until you were blind, and sick, and weak in the knees, and then slumped down suddenly into the very pit you've been struggling against, and found out that you might as well have given way first as last? You!" He laughed. "What does a sainted missionary know of——"

"Stop it!" Anson's face was white in the living heat, and his eyes glowed. "How dare you say what another man has been through or hasn't? How dare you say that you are tempted above other men? I know all that you know, that fighting and torture, and longing."

On the white pebbles Chesney rolled over, peering through the pipe smoke. Pity and love were dulled in him by the swamping passion for drink, and the plain, set face opposite evoked no hin; but curiosity.

"Out with it, preacher, before I'll subscribe to the truth of that," he said. "And *then* I guess I won't. You haven't suffered as I have, because you have never given way."

Anson pulled a liano-length out of a coil of leaves and flowers, twisted it in his fingers, and tossed it from him. Just so had he once pulled the very fibre out of his own heart and cast it behind him. But no man knew the full story of that, and even now, with years between, his knees shook at the remembering.

"If I tell you, and you understand, will it do any good?"

"You must tell me before I can answer that."

"If you realise that I do know what I'm talking about when I say that you can save yourself, will you try again?"

Chesney flung a glance at that face ravaged by fever and struggle, and strong—unusually strong among the faces he knew. Then he sat up and slid his hands under his linked knees.

"Wade in," he said curtly.

This meant agreement and all else, and so Anson understood it.

"There is very little to tell. I loved a woman and I loved my religion. And she said that I must choose between them. And I chose this. Then later I heard that she was to marry a man who was not a good man. If I had gone back at once I could have saved her, for she cared for me. There were two nights and days, and after I had made the choice it was worse. One night I got drunk. And I was a missionary. And after that I went on with my work. I was needed here, and the people love me now."

The words were bald enough, but face and tone told all. Chesney shivered, brushed by the passing wing of realisation. Then:

"That proves only that you loved your religion better than the woman," he said curtly. "You didn't love her as I love my curse."

"You won't say that when I tell you who she is, I think," he said. And then he named her name. It brought Chesney to his feet, staring and stammering. For all men who knew that woman had felt her beauty and her charm even as they had despaired at her coldness.

"It was you, then—you who had the chance that half the fellows in the town would have given their heads for! We always guessed that there was someone, and it was *you!* Great Heavens above! What are you made of?"

"It would have hurt her soul if I had given way to my lesser self for her sake. I had to be strong for us both."

"You're mad," cried Chesney. He thrust his hands into his pockets and stared at the white-faced, white-clothed man opposite. "Well, don't you think you have indulged those over-sanctimonious notions of yours long enough now? Eight years, isn't it? Aren't you going back to her now that he is dead?"

Anson did not move. He had pulled out another liane, a thorny one, and blood came as he gripped it tighter in his palm. Then:

"I did not know he was dead," he said quietly.

"Six months ago. She didn't pretend to mourn him. There had always been someone else. There is someone else still, and everybody knows it. Aren't you going to give up this before it kills you, and go back to her? She's waiting."

He watched Anson with eyes screwed up and a flicker of cruel amusement round his mouth. This man was on the rack. He was in torment, and he would give way as other men did. Why shouldn't he? Missionaries were scarce enough, and Anson had some five thousand natives in his jurisdiction. But what difference did it make if a handful of black brutes married and died according to Church of England tenets or their own?

"If you give me a letter I'll take it down to Rega to catch the mail-boat right away," said Chesney.

He was tempting deliberately, and he

knew it. Somehow, it would be easier to go to Bulalo if Anson was turned Sydney-wards again.

"Come and see what can be done for that sick native, will you?" said Anson, and led him through the sun-glare to the hut in the shadow of the little church.

Chesney followed up the steps silently. But in the austere cleanliness of the low reed-and-lath-built place, with the split-grass shade pulled back so that the light fell full over the man on Anson's bed, he broke suddenly into curses.

"Do you know what you've done? Do you *know?*" he cried. "This man has leprosy. Leprosy! And you have nursed him, and breathed the same air! Chuck him out to die in the bush. Quick!"

He stooped to take the moaning thing by the waistband. And then he found himself swung to the far end of the mat, and Anson standing over him.

"You'll not try that game twice! Can you do anything for him? He's my best teacher."

"Do anything? Yes. I can choke the life out of him! Man, have you touched him? Have you used carbolic? If there's a scratch on you anywhere——"

"I've been careful. He only came down the Coast last night. I'm going up to-morrow to see if there are any more cases. But I don't quite know how to handle the thing. If you would tell me."

"You won't handle it at all. Do you want to catch it, you fool?"

"No, I don't! I have my people to think of."

"Your people! You have yourself and her!"

Anson stooped over the man, bringing fresh, cooling rags wrung out of the calabash on the floor.

"Tell me what to do," he repeated. "How can we ease the pain?"

"Where's your medicine-chest?"

Chesney sought in it, mixed drugs, gave explanations and warnings. Then he went out again to the clean, purifying sunlight, trying to shake off the horror and the fetid odours of that little dark place. And, until he saw Anson's face in the glare, he did not know how much the news he had brought from Sydney had shaken the other man. And yet he had thought that Dick's resistance was broken before they went in.

"You're done, Dick," he said. "Give it best, and go back to her. Eight years of this are as much as any man can be expected to stand. And she still means more to you than your work. You know she does."

"They need me here," said Anson with difficulty.

Chesney glanced round the village. There were thousands such all across and across the Pacific, thousands filled with the like dirty, shiftless, ignorant savages, spawned in myriads from the rich earth, and dying as thickly as they grew.

"Here you're a drop in the bucket," he said. "To her you're the ocean. Come."

Then, for a space, Anson gave way. Chesney had no right to look nor to listen. But he did both, for he was in the fire himself, and he believed that this man would fail as he himself would fail.

The tide came lapping up the beach, and the children woke, running to meet it with shrill cries of delight. The trade-wind blew up cool, and from the big canoe-house the young men sent the canoes to the water with a shout and a rousing splash. The women were crooning low as they fanned the fires to red, whispering tongues again, and Anson rose and looked on these his people.

"Did you say you wanted a fireman, Chesney?" he asked. "I can get you one, I think. Do you want him to-night?"

His voice was toneless, and his eyes would not meet Chesney's. Chesney bit his thumb, frowning. Then he said abruptly:

"Do you want me to take a letter to Kega?"

"No."

"You mean to stay here and see this leprosy business through?"

"Yes."

"Why? Don't you owe *her* anything?"

"Too much to make her an excuse for unworthiness."

Chesney looked over the white strip of shell-sand to the blue water and the little schooner inside the ringing reef where the combers broke.

"I'll stay till to-morrow—in case you want that letter carried," he said, and Anson looked at him with a moment's flicker of pain and sadness in his eyes.

"You're a good tempter, Ches," he replied. "But the Devil's a better, and even he doesn't get a walk-over every time. Run me up the coast this evening, won't you? If there's more leprosy there, we'll have to put a fire-stick through the village and plan out a place for an isolation hospital. It really is the greatest luck in the world that you came to-day."

And Chesney, reading to the heart of this, understood that he was beaten.

Digitized by Google

THE WOOING OF CORINNE.

An American Sketch.

By Margaret Bell.

"Love at first sight was 'er trouble:
She didn't know what it were.
But I couldn't do such 'cause I liked 'er too much.
And—I learnt about women from 'er!"

I.

Corinne and Joseph sat in the High Life Café, drinking beer and eating cheese sandwiches. To eat and drink sometimes comprise one's ideas of high life. That is why Corinne and Joseph chose that café.

Corinne balanced weighted bars and carried Ted Lazenby's five year-old son across twenty feet of tight rope. She had learnt her art many years before, when the line rope stretched from one tenement porch to another.

Joseph was a god in Corinne's eyes, likewise in his own. He rode Firefly, the dappled percheron, around a thirty-foot ring. Corinne and Joseph were both members of the same circus troupe.

"I had an offer from Bob Bingling to-day. He says he'll give me just twice what I'm gettin' now."

Joseph set down his mug, and took a silver cigarette case from his pocket. A silver cigarette case is the trade mark of prosperity. So is a diamond tie-pin. Joseph possessed both.

"Oh, you're not goin' to give us all the good-bye, are you?"

Corinne's query was a tearful one.

Joseph flicked a bit of imaginary dust from his coat sleeve He puffed a long strand of smoke across the two empty beer bottles. His importance was increasing.

"Oh, that depends on how much old Father Floxham thinks it is worth to him to keep me. It's up to him, you know."

"Oh, he really mustn t let you go," wailed Corinne, taking another sandwich.

She had a fascinating tilt to her nose, and her usually pale cheeks were tinted with a flush. Joseph had noted this flush with approval.

"Well, of course, charity ain't exactly in my line. I'm out for the big stake, wherever it is, whether here or with Bingling."

"I wonder if Bingling could find a place for *me* in his show?" Corinne ventured.

Joseph became indifferent.

"Oh, I don't reckon he'd take anyone what couldn't do somethin' special. He's after big acts, Bingling is."

And almost—just almost—a tear dropped into the beer mug which mirrored the *retroussé* nose. It was so wonderful to be great, like Joseph!

Then, a spurt of pride bubbled up to Corinne's lips.

"Well, I guess I ain't no common performer. It's better than holdin' the hoop for you to jump through."

Three or four persons were coming toward the café. They came from the direction of the tents.

"Oh, it's Corinne," one was heard to say, in a voice somewhat feline-like.

They stopped at the table where Corinne and Joseph sipped and sighed. She of the feline propensities was the pert blonde who held the hoop for Joseph. Another member of the quartette was the cowboy, who did a lassooing act. His especial penchant was Corinne.

Natalie, the hoop-holder, spoke again.

"Hello, Joseph! What are you drinkin'? Oh, it's beer. Can you make room at your table for a nice little party?"

They made room, and Natalie, the feline, began to purr.

"Oh, Joseph, you certainly did some riding to-night, all right, all right. Of course, me bein' there all the time, holdin' the hoop an' so on, I could appreciate what the highbrows call the fine points of it. That's why it's me for the hoop every time. No special stunts on the high rope for little Natalie."

Joseph forgot himself long enough to reach over and pinch her cheek.

"An' believe me, you're some hoop-holder too, little 'un."

Natalie chuckled, and looked across at Corinne, whose face was as scarlet as the sinful fruit of Eden. She wondered what she could do to make Joseph jealous.

"You've got a great act there, in that lassoo stunt," she said to the khaki-clad cowboy on her right. "Believe me, you got

Digitized by Google

the hand of the evenin'. Some thrill you gave the audience to-night. I think lassooin' must take such a lot o' brain work."

"Not any more than you, Corinne," he answered. And he stroked her hand.

Joseph frowned.

"Sort of a general admiration society here," he sneered. The cowboy's appreciation of Corinne, and Corinne's obvious appreciation of the cowboy, had robbed him of what good temper remained with him.

He ordered more beer and asked her if she would like some ham and eggs. But Corinne shrugged her eloquent shoulders and smiled a smile of hauteur. Whereupon, Joseph demanded the bill and flung a defiant dollar on the table.

Things seemed to be developing. They strolled out of the café towards the quarters of the Wells-Loco Circus, Corinne laughing gaily with the cowboy, Joseph replying vaguely to Natalie's chatter.

II.

There was a great commotion around the tents. Everyone seemed to be calling to everyone else. And now and then came the whine of an animal. Joseph began to run. Corinne hurried after, followed by Bud, the cowboy, imploring her not to go so fast.

Then arose the smell of smoke! Yes, that was it. A fire! Corinne wept. The baby rhinoceros would be burnt, and Romeo, the dancing elephant, and Joseph's beautiful horse, Firefly. Corinne ran on.

The fire had spread from the cooking-tent. It ran along the grass to the sleeping quarters of the larger animals. In the sleeping quarters was much straw. Corinne's breath came in little sobs. The baby rhinoceros slept in a wagon-cage in the large tent. The straw bedding was all around him. Would Joseph think of him?

But there were policemen at the entrance to the grounds. They kept pushing back the crowds. She tried to slip in past one, but he saw her and waved her back. Nearer and nearer crept the snake of fire, licking up the grass. Where could Joseph be?

There came the clanging of the fire-bell! Faster and faster raced the engines, scattering the crowds before them.

Something was happening in the tent. Corinne heard a voice above the clamour of the crowd. It sounded like order. The voice belonged to Joseph.

Something happened. One side of the tent seemed to be ripped from its poles and there stood all the horses in a row. The hose was turned toward the piles of straw. Round and round went the stream till it had reached the circle of the tent. Joseph cut the halters of the horses and loosened the elephants' chains. And the great procession of beasts filed out, one by one. He had given the order for parade.

At the other side of the big tent, was a tank used for the gasoline which supplied the lights. The flames seemed to be seeking this tank. They ran around the grass, at the edge of the water-soaked straw. One or two reached up to the tent flap. Another cut a rope, which held the flap in place. Almost all the animals had gone, except Firefly and a few parade beasts. Firefly was toward the side facing the gasoline tank. Joseph had not reached him. In his excitement, the beautiful beast had become entangled in his halter.

There was a crash. The flames had found the gasoline tank. The side of the tent was a yellow mass, and the straw began to burn under Firefly's feet. Joseph came closer. Each horse was untied and sent out in parade order. Firefly was next.

The flames played around in the straw. Firefly was loosed, then another. The last horse was moaning piteously. A flame shot up toward the halter. That helped, for the horse kicked, and the halter snapped. He stood there, petrified. Joseph loosened the last rope.

And then, for just a moment, he hesitated. The horse belonged to Bud, the cowboy. Joseph thought of Corinne.

But two tears rolled slowly down the poor brute's face. That was too much for Joseph.

He took his silk handkerchief, and thrust it over the two imploring eyes. The flames reached up and licked his face. The tent poles creaked.

Then slowly, he took Bud's horse by the nose and turned him away from the horrible smell of burning gasoline. Together, they walked across the bed of flame, toward the crowd of onlookers, now riotous in applause.

At the outside of the tumultuous circle, was a face which was radiant with more than excitement. Joseph saw that face, as he led the horse into the cool, night air.

He stopped before Corinne, and wiped his forehead.

"That was the best act you ever did," she said tremblingly.

"I did it for you, little one," Joseph answered.

She reached up and touched the hot cheek, with her cool, red lips.

Digitized by Google

MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Good Things in Store for You.

HOLIDAYS FROM THE TRENCHES.

Troops are not always in the trenches, and when they enjoy a few days' rest they are eager to go back home, at any rate mentally, by means of magazines and periodicals.

It occurs to me that you might like to know what we are doing in the way of providing reading matter for men on service. Ever since the war started parcels of magazines have been sent regularly to the Front from this office, and many a grateful letter, quite apart from the official letters of thanks, has arrived to say how much a magazine from home does to cheer up a weary warrior.

We have sent, also, supplies of magazines to various hospitals, training camps, and so on, and here again they have been received with much joy. In this way the Royal tries to do its share towards helping in the war.

Nevertheless, the supply of these gift magazines is never equal to the demand. This is where you can help, all of you, if only you will. Won't you please send your copy of the Royal after you have read it, to some soldier of the British Expeditionary Force? And if you can manage to send a few extra copies now and again, every single one will be welcome.

THE FRESH AIR FUND.

Thanks to the very kind interest she is taking in the F.A.F., I am enabled to publish on page 365 a fresh appeal by Miss Phyllis Monkman, who dances so exquisitely at the Alhambra Theatre. When I took her a proof of this latest appeal Miss Monkman was in the midst of making up for her first dance in the Alhambra *revue*, but she began at once to inquire with the greatest eagerness "how the money was coming in." I can assure you she is very anxious indeed to collect a record sum of money this year for the Fund, and I do hope you will do your very best to swell the grand total collected from readers of the Royal.

If every one of you would send ninepence, that alone would mean a very large sum of money. If, in addition, each of you coaxed ninepence out of a friend—well, I should be proud to pass the page for press that bore the mighty figure all those ninepences would make.

Below are acknowledged, with grateful thanks from Miss Monkman and myself, sums received up to the time of going to press:

Lieut.-Com. C. Swift and Mrs. Swift, £5; R. H. Whateley, £2 2s.; A. Duesbury, 1s. 3d.; M. Rees, 1s.; Dunedin, 1s. 1d.; Children lovers, Burmah, 12s.; L. F., 1s. 6d.; J. Wilson, 1s. 6d.; Gillingham, 1s.; Embryo Officer, 10s.; F. A. Lovegrove, £1; D. B., 2s. 6d.; Miss Hodgson, 5s. 3d.; W. Maxwell, 5s.; Miss Derrick, 1s. 6d.; Chester, 1s. 6d.; Mrs. Darling and E. Morris, 7s. 6d.; Mrs. H. C. Miller, £1; Well-wisher, 9d.; Lincoln, 1s. 6d.; Vickers' Drawing Office, Barrow, 18s.; Miss Scons, £1 10s.; E. Gurney, 4s. 6d.; One Officer, 1s. 6d.; Mrs Coghlan, 5s.; J. A. Reid, 5s. 3d.; A. E. Brown, £1; Joyce Straker, 9d.; Lossiemouth, 10s.; A. Pigott, 10s.; W. H. Sidney, £1 1s.; Anonymous, per Miss P. Monkman, £1 8s. 6d. and £1, 20 francs (15s.); W. Dean, 3s.; Miss Perrott, 1s. 6d.; Anon., 2s. 3d.; Friends, 15s.; Miss Currie, 3s.; Captain and Ship's Company of P.S.S. *Braunfels*, £14; Mrs. Ring, 1s. 6d.; Anon., 2s. 6d.

Total: £36 14s. 3d.

NEXT MONTH

the special Summer Number of the Royal will be in your hands. This year we have decided not to arrange for special Holiday and Seaside Numbers, because, unfortunately, 1915 will not see the holiday and seaside spirit abroad in the land, for good, or rather bad, and obvious reasons. But, since the sun shines on the just and unjust alike, summer comes even to a world convulsed with slaughter, and we have tried to make the Summer Number of the Royal all the more attractive in order to lighten for a moment the cares that sadden us all in these critical days.

The cost to you will be 4½d. as usual, but this is no indication of the value given in return. The Summer Number of the Royal is beyond price.

Digitized by Google